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THE

WORKS

OF

EDWARD YOUNG, D. D.

AUTHOR OF

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REVISED AND CORRECTED BY HIMSELF.

A NEW EDITION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE

REVENGE.

A TRAGEDY.

Manet alta mente repostum. VIRG.

PROLOGUE,

BY A FRIEND.

Oft has the buskin'd Muse, with action mean,
Debas'd the glory of the tragic scene;
While puny villains, dress'd in purple pride,
With crimes obscene the heaven-born rage bely'd.
To her belongs to mourn the hero's fate,
To trace the errors of the wise and great;
To mark th' excess of passions too refin'd,
And paint the tumults of a godlike mind;
Where, mix'd with rage, exalted thoughts combine,
And darkest deeds with beauteous colours shine.
Such lights and shades in a well-mingled draught,
By curious touch of artful pencil wrought,
With soft deceit amuse the doubtful eye,
Pleas'd with the conflict of the various dye.
Thus, through the following scenes, with sweet surprise,
Virtue and Guilt in dread confusion rise;
And Love and Hate, at once, and Grief and Joy,
Pity and Rage, their mingled force employ.
Here the soft virgin sees, with secret shame,
Her charms excell'd by friendship's purer flame;
Forc'd, with reluctant virtue, to approve
The generous hero who rejects her love.
Behold him there with gloomy passions stain'd,
A wife suspected, and an injur'd friend;
Yet such the toil where innocence is caught,
That rash suspicion seems without a fault.

We dread a while lest beauty should succeed,
And almost wish e'en virtue's self may bleed.
Mark well the black revenge, the cruel guile,
The traitor-fiend trampling the lovely spoil,
Of beauty, truth, and innocence opprest;
Then let the rage of furies fire your breast.
Yet may his mighty wrongs, his just disdain,
His bleeding country, his lov'd father slain,
His martial pride, your admiration raise,
And crown him with involuntary praise.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Don ALONZO, the Spanish General.
Don CARLOS, his Friend.
Don ALVAREZ, a Courtier.
Don MANUEL, Attendant of Don CARLOS.
ZANGA, a Captive Moor.

WOMEN.

LEONORA, ALVAREZ's Daughter.
ISABELLA, the Moor's Mistress.

SCENE, *SPAIN.*

THE

REVENGE.

ACT I.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

WHETHER first nature, or long want of peace,
Has wrought my mind to this, I cannot tell;
But horrors now are not displeasing to me:
I like this rocking of the battlements.
Rage on, ye winds; burst, clouds; and waters, roar!
You bear a just resemblance of my fortune,
And suit the gloomy habit of my soul.
[*Enter* Isabella.
Who's there? My love!

ISABELLA.

Why have you left my bed?
Your absence more affrights me than the storm.

ZANGA.

The dead alone, in such a night can rest;
And I indulge my meditation here.
Woman, away: I choose to be alone.

ISABELLA.

I know you do, and therefore will not leave you;
Excuse me, Zanga, therefore dare not leave you.
Is this a night for walks of contemplation?
Something unusual hangs upon your heart,

And I will know it; by our loves, I will.
To you I sacrific'd my virgin fame;
Ask I too much to share in your distress?

ZANGA.

In tears? Thou fool! Then hear me, and be plung'd
In hell's abyss, if ever it escape thee.
To strike thee with astonishment at once,
I hate Alonzo! First recover that,
And then thou shalt hear farther.

ISABELLA.

Hate Alonzo!
I own, I thought Alonzo most your friend;
And that he lost the master in that name.

ZANGA.

Hear, then: 'Tis twice three years since that great man
(Great let me call him, for he conquer'd me)
Made me the captive of his arm in fight;
He slew my father, and threw chains o'er me,
While I, with pious rage, pursu'd revenge:
I then was young; he plac'd me near his person,
And thought me not dishonour'd by his service.
One day, (may that returning day be night,
The stain, the curse, of each succeeding year!)
For something, or for nothing, in his pride
He struck me; (While I tell it, do I live?)
He smote me on the cheek—I did not stab him;
For that were poor revenge—E'er since, his folly
Has strove to bury it beneath a heap
Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.
Insolent thought! and like a second blow!

Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless;
And such alone can wisely drop revenge.

ISABELLA.

But with more temper, Zanga, tell your story:
To see your strong emotions startles me.

ZANGA.

Yes, woman, with a temper *that befits it.*
Has the dark adder *venom? So have I,*
When trod upon. *Proud Spaniard, thou shalt feel me!*
For from that day, *that day of my dishonour,*
I from that day have curs'd *the rising sun,*
Which never fail'd to tell me *of my shame:*
I from that day have blest the coming night,
Which promis'd to conceal it; but in vain;
The blow return'd for ever in my dream:
Yet on I toil'd, and groan'd for an occasion
Of ample vengeance: None is yet arriv'd.
Howe'er, at present I conceive warm hopes
Of what may wound him sore in his ambition;
Life of his life, and dearer than his soul.
By nightly march he purpos'd to surprise
The Moorish camp; but I have taken care
They shall be ready to receive his favour.
Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment,
Would darken all the conquests he has won.

ISABELLA.

Just as I enter'd an express arriv'd.

ZANGA.

To whom?

ISABELLA.

His friend, Don Carlos.

ZANGA.

Be propitious,
O Mahomet, on this important hour,
And give at length my famish'd soul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, and wisdom to convert
Others' self-love into our own protection?
But see, the morning ray breaks in upon us;
I'll seek Don Carlos, and enquire my fate. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MANUEL *and Don* CARLOS.

MANUEL.

My lord Don Carlos, what brings your express?

CARLOS.

Alonzo's victory, and the Moors' defeat.
The fields strew'd with twice ten thousand slain,
Though he suspects his measures were betray'd.
He'll soon arrive. O how I long t' embrace
The first of heroes and the best of friends!—
I lov'd fair Leonora long before
The chance of battle gave me to the Moors,
From whom so late Alonzo set me free;
And while I groan'd in bondage, I deputed
This great Alonzo, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love,
To stir her heart, and fan its fires, for me.

MANUEL.

And what success?

CARLOS.

Alas! the cruel maid—
Indeed, her father, who, though high at court,
And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart,
To heal his devastations from the Moors,
Knowing I'm richly freighted from the East,
My fleet now sailing in the sight of Spain,
(Heav'n guard it safe through such a dreadful storm!)
Caresses me, and urges her to wed.

MANUEL.

Her aged father, see! leads her this way.

CARLOS.

She looks like radiant Youth
Brought forward by the hand of hoary Time—
You to the port with speed; 'tis possible
Some vessel is arriv'd: Heav'n grant it bring
Tidings which Carlos may receive with joy!

[*Exit* Manuel.

Enter ALVAREZ *and* LEONORA.

ALVAREZ.

Don Carlos, I am labouring in your favour
With all a parent's soft authority,
And earnest counsel.

CARLOS.

Angels second you!
For all my bliss or misery hangs on it.

ALVAREZ.

Daughter, the happiness of life depends
On our discretion, and a prudent choice.
Look into those they call unfortunate,

And, closer view'd, you 'll find they are unwise:
Some flaw in their own conduct lies beneath;
And 'tis the trick of fools, to save their credit,
Which brought another language into use.
Don Carlos is of ancient, noble blood;
And then his wealth might mend a prince's fortune:
For him the sun is labouring in the mines,
A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold:
His keels are freighted with that sacred pow'r,
By which e'en kings and emperors are made.
Sir, you have my good wishes: and I hope [*To* Carlos.
My daughter is not indispos'd to hear you. [*Exit.* Alv.

CARLOS.

O Leonora! why art thou in tears?
Because I am less wretched than I was?
Before your father gave me leave to woo you,
Hush'd was your bosom, and your eye serene.
Will you for ever help me to new pains,
And keep reserves of torment in your hand,
To let them loose on every dawn of joy?

LEONORA.

Think you my father too indulgent to me,
That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?
A daughter sure may be right dutiful,
Whose tears alone are free from a restraint—

CARLOS.

Ah my torn heart!

LEONORA.

Regard not me, my lord;
I shall obey my father.

CARLOS.

Disobey him,
Rather than come thus coldly; than come thus
With absent eyes, and alienated mien,
Suff'ring address, the victim of my love.
O let me be undone the common way,
And have the common comfort to be pity'd;
And not be ruin'd in the mask of bliss,
And so be envy'd, and be wretched too!
Love calls for love. Not all the pride of beauty;
Those eyes, that tell us what the sun is made of;
Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life;
Those hills of driven snow, which seen are felt:
All these possest are nought, but as they are
The proof, the substance of an inward passion,
And the rich plunder of a taken heart.

LEONORA.

Alas! my lord, we are too delicate;
And when we grasp the happiness we wish'd,
We call on wit to argue it away:
A plainer man would not feel half your pains;
But some have too much wisdom to be happy.

CARLOS.

Had I known this before, it had been well:
I had not then solicited your father
To add to my distress; as you behave,
Your father's kindness stabs me to the heart.
Give me your hand—Nay, give it, Leonora:
You give it not;—nay, yet you give it not—
I ravish it.——

LEONORA.

I pray, my lord, no more.

CARLOS.

Ah! why so sad? You know each sigh does shake me;
Sighs there, are tempests here.——
I've heard, bad men would be unblest in heav'n:
What is my guilt, that makes me so with you?
Have I not languish'd prostrate at thy feet?
Have I not liv'd whole days upon thy sight?
Have I not seen thee where thou hast not been,
And, mad with the idea, clasp'd the wind,
And doted upon nothing?

LEONORA.

Court me not,
Good Carlos, by recounting of my faults,
And telling how ungrateful I have been.
Alas! my lord, if talking would prevail,
I could suggest much better arguments,
Than those regards you threw away on me;—
Your valour, honour, wisdom, prais'd by all:
But bid physicians talk our veins to temper,
And with an argument new-set a pulse;
Then think, my lord, of reasoning into love.

CARLOS.

Must I then despair? Do not shake me thus;
My tempest-beaten heart is cold to death:
Ah! turn, and let me warm me in thy beauties.
Heav'ns! what a proof I gave, but two nights past,
Of matchless love! To fling me at thy feet,
I slighted friendship, and I flew from fame;

Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle:
But darting headlong to thy arms, I left
The promis'd fight; I left Alonzo too,
To stand the war, and quell a world alone. [*Trumpets.*

LEONORA.

The victor comes. My lord, I must withdraw.

CARLOS.

And must you go?

LEONORA.

Why should you wish my stay?
Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
My presence none; it pains you and myself:
For both our sakes, permit me to withdraw.

[*Exit* Leonora.

CARLOS.

Sure, there 's no peril, but in love. O how
My foes would boast to see me look so pale!

[*Enter* Alonzo.

Alonzo!

ALONZO.

Carlos!—I am whole again:
Claspt in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.

CARLOS.

Whom dare I thus embrace? The conqueror of Africk?

ALONZO.

Yes, much more; Don Carlos' friend.
The conquest of the world would cost me dear,
Should it beget one thought of distance in thee.
I rise in virtues to come nearer thee:
I conquer with Don Carlos in my eye;

And thus I claim my victory's reward. [*Embracing him.*

CARLOS.

A victory indeed! Your godlike arm
Has made one spot the grave of Africa,
Such numbers fell; and the survivors fled
As frighted passengers from off the strand,
When the tempestuous sea comes roaring on them.

ALONZO.

'Twas Carlos conquer'd; 'twas his cruel chains
Inflam'd me to a rage unknown before,
And threw my former actions far behind.

CARLOS.

I love fair Leonora: How I love her!
Yet still I find (I know not how it is)
Another heart, another soul, for thee.
Thy friendship warms, it raises, it transports
Like music; pure the joy without allay;
Whose very rapture is tranquillity:
But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
Heighten'd indeed beyond all mortal pleasures;
But mingles pangs and madness in the bowl.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

Manuel, my lord, returning from the port,
On business both of moment and of haste,
Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.

CARLOS.

In private!—Ha—Alonzo, I'll return;
No business can detain me long from thee. [*Exit.* Car.

ZANGA.

My lord Alonzo, I obey'd your orders.

ALONZO.

Will the fair Leonora pass this way?

ZANGA.

She will, my lord; and soon.

ALONZO.

Come near me, Zanga;
For I dare open all my heart to thee.
Never was such a day of triumph known!
There's not a wounded captive in my train,
That slowly follow'd my proud chariot wheels,
With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
But is a god to me: I am most wretched.
In his captivity, thou know'st, Don Carlos,
My friend, (and never was a friend more dear,)
Deputed me his advocate in love,
To talk to Leonora's heart, and make
A tender party in her thoughts, for him.
What did I do? I lov'd myself. Indeed,
One thing there is might lessen my offence
(If such offence admits of being lessen'd);
I thought him dead; for (by what fate I know not)
His letters never reach'd me.

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

Thanks to Zanga,
Who thence contriv'd that evil which has happen'd.

ALONZO.

Yes, curs'd of heav'n! I lov'd myself: and now,
In a late action, rescu'd from the Moors,
I have brought home my rival in my friend.

ZANGA.

We hear, my lord, that in that action too,
Your interposing arm preserv'd his life.

ALONZO.

It did—with more than the expence of mine;
For, O! this day is mention'd for their nuptials.
But see, she comes—I 'll take my leave, and die.

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

Hadst thou a thousand lives, thy death would please me.
Unhappy fate! My country overcome;
My six years' hope of vengeance quite expir'd!——
Would nature were—I will not fall alone;
But others' groans shall tell the world my death.

[*Enter* Leonora.

ALONZO.

When nature ends with anguish like to this,
Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
And bid the light adieu.

LEONORA.

The mighty conqueror
Dismay'd! I thought you gave the foe your sorrows.

ALONZO.

O cruel insult! are those tears your sport,
Which nothing but a love for you could draw?
Africk I quell'd, in hope by that to purchase
Your leave to sigh unscorn'd; but I complain not;
'Twas but a world; and you are—Leonora.

LEONORA.

That passion which you boast of is your guilt;
A treason to your friend. You think mean of me,
To plead your crimes as motives of my love.

ALONZO.

You, madam, ought to thank those crimes you blame;
'Tis they permit you to be thus inhuman,
Without the censure both of earth and heav'n—
I fondly thought a last look might be kind.
Farewell for ever.—This severe behaviour
Has, to my comfort, made it sweet to die.

LEONORA. [*aside.*]

Farewell for ever!—Sweet to die!—O heav'n!
Alonzo, stay: you must not thus escape me;
But hear your guilt at large.

ALONZO.

O Leonora!
What could I do? In duty to my friend,
I saw you; and to see is to admire.
For Carlos did I plead, and most sincerely;
Witness the thousand agonies it cost me:
You know I did; I sought but your esteem;
If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty:
I often sigh'd; nay, wept; but could not help it;
And sure it is no crime to be in pain!
But grant my crime was great, I'm greatly curs'd.
What would you more? Am I not most undone?
This usage is like stamping on the murder'd
When life is fled; most barbarous and unjust.

LEONORA. [*going.*]

If from your guilt none suffer'd but yourself,
It might be so——Farewell.

ALONZO.

Who suffers with me?

LEONORA.

Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.

ALONZO.

Alas! what is there I can fear to know,
Since I already know your hate? Your actions
Have long since told me that.

LEONORA.

They flatter'd you.

ALONZO.

How? Flatter'd me!

LEONORA.

O search in fate no further!
I hate thee, O Alonzo! How I hate thee!

ALONZO.

Indeed! and do you weep for hatred too?
O what a doubtful torment heaves my heart!——
I hope it most—and yet I dread it more.
Should it be so; should her tears flow from thence;
How would my soul blaze up in estasy!
Ah, no! How sink into the depth of horrors!

LEONORA.

Why would you force my stay?

ALONZO.

What mean these tears?

LEONORA.

I weep by chance; nor have my tears a meaning——
But, O! when I first saw Alonzo's tears,
I knew their meaning well.

[Alonzo *falls passionately on his knees, and takes her hand.*

ALONZO.

Heav'ns, what is this? That excellence for which
Desire was planted in the heart of man;
Virtue's supreme reward on this side heav'n;
The cordial of my soul! and this destroys me——
Indeed I flatter'd me that thou didst hate.

LEONORA.

Alonzo, pardon me the injury
Of loving you: I struggled with my passion,
And struggled long; let that be some excuse.

ALONZO.

Unkind! You know I think your love a blessing
Beyond all human blessings; 'tis the price
Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying:—
But O the curse of curses! O my friend!

LEONORA.

Alas!

ALONZO.

What says my love?——Speak, Leonora.

LEONORA.

Was it for you, my lord, to be so quick,
In finding out objections to our love?
Think you so strong my love, or weak my virtue,
It was unsafe to leave that part to me?

ALONZO.

Is not the day then fix'd for your espousals?

LEONORA.

Indeed, my father once had thought that way;
But marking how the marriage pain'd my heart,
Long he stood doubtful; but at last resolv'd
Your counsel, which determines him in all,
Should finish the debate.

ALONZO.

O agony!
Must I not only lose her, but be made
Myself the instrument? Not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myself?
This is refining on calamity.

LEONORA.

What! do you tremble lest you should be mine?
For what else can you tremble? Not for that
My father places in your power to alter.

ALONZO.

What 's in my power?—O yes, to stab my friend!

LEONORA.

To stab your friend were barbarous indeed!
Spare him—and murder me—I own, Alonzo,
You may well wonder at such words as these;
I start at them myself; they fright my nature.
Great is my fault; but blame not me alone:
Give him a little blame, who took such pains
To make me guilty.

ALONZO.

Torment!

[*After a pause,* Leonora *speaks.*

LEONORA.

O my shame!
I sue, and sue in vain; it is most just:
When women sue, they sue to be deny'd.
You hate me, you despise me: You do well:
For what I've done, I hate and scorn myself.
O night fall on me! I shall blush to death.

ALONZO.

First perish all.

LEONORA.

Say; what have you resolv'd?
My father comes; what answer will you give him?

ALONZO.

What answer? Let me look upon that face,
And read it there—Devote thee to another!
Not to be borne! A second look undoes me.

LEONORA.

And why undo you? Is it then, my lord,
So terrible to yield to your own wishes,
Because they happen to concur with mine?
Cruel! to take such pains to win a heart,
Which you was conscious you must break with parting.

ALONZO. [*Runs and embraces her.*]

No, Leonora; I am thine for ever,
In spite of Carlos.—Ha! Who's that? My friend!
[*Starts wide from her.*
Alas! I see him pale; I hear his groans:
He foams, he tears his hair, he raves, he bleeds;
(I know him by myself) he dies distracted.

LEONORA.

How dreadful to be cut from what we love!

ALONZO.

Ah! speak no more.

LEONORA.

And ty'd to what we hate.

ALONZO.

Oh!

LEONORA.

Is it possible?

ALONZO.

Death!

LEONORA.

Can you?

ALONZO.

Oh——

Yes, take a limb; but let my virtue 'scape.
Alas! my soul, this moment I die for thee.

[*Breaks away.*

LEONORA.

And are you perjur'd, then, for virtue's sake?
How often have you sworn! But go for ever—

[*Swoons.*

ALONZO.

Heart of my heart, and essence of my joy!
Where art thou?—O, I 'm thine, and thine for ever!
The groans of friendship shall be heard no more;
For whatsoever crimes I can commit,
I 've felt the pains already.

LEONORA.

Hold, Alonzo;
And hear a maid, whom doubly thou hast conquer'd.
I love thy virtue, as I love thy person;
And I adore thee for the pain it gave me:
But as I felt the pain, I 'll reap the fruit;
I 'll shine out in my turn, and shew the world
Thy great example was not lost upon me.

Be it enough, that I have once been guilty;
In sight of such a pattern, to persist,
Ill suits a person honour'd with your love.
My other titles to that bliss are weak;
I must deserve it by refusing it:
Thus then I tear thee from my hopes for ever.
Shall I contribute to Alonzo's crimes?
No, though the life-blood gushes from my heart,
You shall not be asham'd of Leonora,
Or, that late time may put our names together.
Nay, never shrink; take back the bright example
You lately lent: O take it while you may;
While I can give it you, and be immortal. [*Exit.*

ALONZO.

She's gone, and I shall see that face no more;
But pine in absence, and till death adore.
When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
And my eyes darken, from my falt'ring tongue
Her name will tremble in a feeble moan,
And love, with fate, divide my dying groan.

ACT II.

Enter MANUEL *and* ZANGA.

ZANGA.

If this be true, I cannot blame your pain
For wretched Carlos: 'tis but human in you.
But when arriv'd your dismal news?

MANUEL.

This hour.

ZANGA.

What, not a vessel sav'd?

MANUEL.

All, all, the storm
Devour'd; and now, o'er his late envy'd fortune,
The dolphins bound, and wat'ry mountains roar,
Triumphant in his ruin.

ZANGA.

Is Alvarez
Determin'd to deny his daughter to him?
That treasure was on shore; must that too join
The common wreck?

MANUEL.

Alvarez pleads indeed,
That Leonora's heart is disinclin'd,
And pleads that only; so it was this morning,

When he concurr'd: the tempest broke the match,
And sunk his favour, when it sunk the gold:
The love of gold is double in his heart;
The vice of age, and of Alvarez too.

ZANGA.

How does Don Carlos bear it?

MANUEL.

Like a man,
Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel,
And reasons best a human head can reason.

ZANGA.

But is he then in absolute despair?

MANUEL.

Never to see his Leonora more:
And, quite to quench all future hope, Alvarez
Urges Alonzo to espouse his daughter
This very day; for he has learnt their loves.

ZANGA.

Ha! was not that receiv'd with ecstasy
By Don Alonzo?

MANUEL.

Yes, at first; but soon
A damp came o'er him: it would kill his friend.

ZANGA.

Not if his friend consented: and since now
He can't himself espouse her——

MANUEL.

Yet to ask it
Has something shocking to a generous mind:
At least Alonzo's spirit startles at it.

Wide is the distance between our despair,
And giving up a mistress to another.
But I must leave you. Carlos wants support
In his severe affliction. [*Exit* Manuel.

ZANGA.

Ha! it dawns——
It rises to me like a new-found world
To mariners long time distress'd at sea,
Sore from a storm, and all their viands spent;——
Or like the sun just rising out of chaos,
Some dregs of ancient night not quite purg'd off:
But I shall finish it—Ho! Isabella!

[*Enter* Isabella.

I thought of dying; better things come forward;
Vengeance is still alive; from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms.
When, Isabel, arriv'd Don Carlos here?

ISABELLA.

Two nights ago.

ZANGA.

That was the very night
Before the battle—Memory, set down that;
It has the essence of a crocodile,
Though yet but in the shell—I 'll give it birth—
What time did he return?

ISABELLA.

At midnight.

ZANGA.

So——

Say, did he see, that night, his Leonora?

ISABELLA.

No, my good lord.

ZANGA.

No matter—Tell me, woman,
Is not Alonzo rather brave than cautious;
Honest than subtle; above fraud himself,
Slow therefore to suspect it in another?

ISABELLA.

You best can judge; but so the world thinks of him.

ZANGA.

Why that is well——Go fetch my tablets hither.

[*Exit* Isabella.

Two nights ago, my father's sacred shade
Thrice stalk'd around my bed, and smil'd upon me;
He smil'd, a joy then little understood——
It must be so—and if so, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

[*Re-enter* Isabella *with the tablets.* Zanga *writes, then reads as to himself.*

Thus it stands—
The father's fixt—Don Carlos cannot wed——
Alonzo may—but that will hurt his friend——
Nor can he ask his leave——If he did,
He might not gain it———It is hard to give
Our own consent to ills, though we must bear them.—
Were it not then a master-piece, worth all

The wisdom I can boast, first to persuade
Alonzo to request it of his friend,
His friend to grant—then, from that very grant,
The strongest proof of friendship man can give,
(And other motives) to work out a cause
Of jealousy, to rack Alonzo's peace?
I have turn'd o'er the catalogue of woes,
Which sting the heart of man, and find none equal:
It is the Hydra of calamities;
The seven-fold death: The jealous are the damn'd.
O jealousy, each other passion 's calm
To thee, thou conflagration of the soul!
Thou king of torments! thou grand counterpoise
For all the transports beauty can inspire!

ISABELLA.

Alonzo comes this way.

ZANGA.

Most opportunely.
Withdraw—Ye subtle Dæmons which reside

[*Exit* Isabella.

In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,
That little engin'ry, more mischievous
Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,
Teach me to look a lie; give me your maze
Of gloomy thought, and intricate design,
To catch the man I hate, and then devour.

[*Enter* Alonzo.

My lord, I give you joy.

ALONZO.

Of what, good Zanga?

ZANGA.

Is not the lovely Leonora yours?

ALONZO.

What will become of Carlos?

ZANGA.

He 's your friend;
And since he can't espouse the fair himself,
Will take some comfort from Alonzo's fortune.

ALONZO.

Alas! thou little know'st the force of love;
Love reigns a sultan with unrivall'd sway,
Puts all relations, friendship's self, to death,
If once he 's jealous of it. I love Carlos;
Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning
At his intended nuptials: For myself
I then felt pains, which now for him I feel.

ZANGA.

You will not wed her then?

ALONZO.

Not instantly:
Insult his broken heart the very moment!

ZANGA.

I understand you: But you 'll wed hereafter,
When your friend's gone, and his first pain assuag'd?

ALONZO.

Am I to blame for that?

ZANGA.

My lord, I love
Your very errors; they are born from virtue:

Your friendship (and what nobler passion claims
The heart?) does lead your blindness to your ruin.
Consider, wherefore did Alvarez break
Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge Alonzo's?
'Twas the same cause; the love of wealth: To-morrow
May see Alonzo in Don Carlos' fortune:
A higher bidder is a better friend;
And there are princes sigh for Leonora.
When your friend's gone, you 'll wed: why then the cause,
Which gives you Leonora now, will cease.
Carlos has lost her; should you lose her too,
Why then you heap new torments on your friend,
By that respect which labour'd to relieve him.——
'Tis well; he is disturb'd; it makes him pause. [*Aside.*

ALONZO.

Think'st thou, my Zanga, should I ask Don Carlos,
His goodness will consent that I should wed her?

ZANGA.

I know it would.

ALONZO.

But then the cruelty
To ask it; and for *me* to ask it of *him!*

ZANGA.

Methinks, you are severe upon your friend:—
Who was it gave him liberty and life?

ALONZO.

That is the very reason which forbids it:
Were I a stranger, I could freely speak:

In me, it so resembles a demand,
Exacting of a debt, it shocks my nature.

ZANGA.

My lord, you know the sad alternative.
Is Leonora worth one pang or not?
It hurts not me, my lord, but as I love you:
Warmly as you, I wish Don Carlos well;
But I am likewise Don Alonzo's friend:
There all the difference lies between us two:
In me, my lord, you hear another self,
And, give me leave to add, a better too,
Clear'd from those errors, which, tho' caus'd by virtue,
Are such as may hereafter give you pain.——
Don Lopez of Castile would not demur thus.

ALONZO.

Perish the name! What! sacrifice the fair
To age and illness, because set in gold?
I'll to Don Carlos, if my heart will let me:
I have not seen him since his sore affliction;
But shunn'd it, as too terrible to bear:
How shall I bear it now? I'm struck already.

[*Exit* Alonzo.

ZANGA.

Half my work is done. I must secure
Don Carlos, ere Alonzo speaks with him.

[*He gives a message to a servant, then returns.*

Proud, hated Spain! oft drench'd in Moorish blood;
Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee?
Shake not thy tow'rs where'er I pass along,
Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer?

Shake to the centre, if Alonzo's dear.
Look down, O holy prophet! see me torture
This Christian dog, this infidel, which dares
To smite thy votaries and spurn thy law;
And yet hopes pleasure from two radiant eyes,
Which look as they were lighted up for thee!
Shall he enjoy thy paradise below?
Blast the bold thought, and curse him with her charms.—
But see the melancholy lover comes.

Enter Don CARLOS.

CARLOS.

Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day,
For more than twenty years; vile promiser!
None here are happy, but the very fool,
Or very wise; and I want fool enough,
To smile on vanities, and hug a shadow;
Nor have I wisdom to elaborate
An artificial happiness from pains:
E'en joys are pains, because they cannot last. [*Sighs.*
Yet much is talk'd of bliss; it is the art
Of such as have the world in their possession,
To give it a good name, that fools may envy;
For envy to small minds is flattery.
How many lift the head, look gay, and smile,
Against their consciences! And this we know;
Yet, knowing, disbelieve! and try again
What we have try'd, and struggle with conviction:
Each new experience gives the former credit;

And reverend gray Threescore is but a voucher,
That Thirty told us true.

ZANGA.

My noble lord,
I mourn your fate: But are no hopes surviving?

CARLOS.

No hopes. Alvarez has a heart of steel:
'Tis fixt; 'tis past; 'tis absolute despair.

ZANGA.

You wanted not to have your heart made tender
By your own pains, to feel a friend's distress.

CARLOS.

I understand you well. Alonzo loves;
I pity him.

ZANGA.

I dare be sworn you do:
Yet he has other thoughts.

CARLOS.

What canst thou mean?

ZANGA.

Indeed he has; and fears to ask a favour,
A stranger from a stranger might request;
What costs you nothing, yet is all to him:
Nay, what indeed will to your glory add,
For nothing more than wishing your friend well.

CARLOS.

I pray be plain: His happiness is mine.

ZANGA.

He loves to death; but so reveres his friend,
He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid,

Without your leave, and that he fears to ask
In perfect tenderness: I urg'd him to it,
Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,
Your overflowing goodness to your friend,
Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her;
I wrung a promise from him he would try;
And now I come a mutual friend to both,
Without his privacy, to let you know it,
And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

CARLOS.

Ha! if he weds, I am undone indeed:
Not Don Alvarez' self can then relieve me.

ZANGA.

Alas! my lord, you know "his heart is steel:
"'Tis fixt! 'tis past! 'tis absolute despair."

CARLOS.

O cruel heaven! and is it not enough
That I must never, never see her more?
Say, is it not enough that I must die;
But must I be tormented in the grave?
Ask my consent!—Must I then give her to him?
Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid?
O! Leonora! never, never, never!

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

A storm of plagues upon him! He refuses.

CARLOS.

What! wed her?—and to-day?

ZANGA.

To-day, or never:
To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,

And then Alonzo is thrown out like you;
Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune?
Carlos is an Alvarez to his love.

CARLOS.

O torment! whither shall I turn?

ZANGA.

To peace.

CARLOS.

Which is the way?

ZANGA.

"His happiness is yours:"
I dare not disbelieve you.

CARLOS.

Kill my friend!
Or worse! Alas! and can there be a worse?——
A worse there is! nor can my nature bear it.

ZANGA.

You have convinc'd me 'tis a dreadful task.
I find, Alonzo's quitting her this morning,
For Carlos' sake, in tenderness to you,
Betray'd me to believe it less severe
Than I perceive it is.——

CARLOS.

Thou dost upbraid me.

ZANGA.

No, my good lord; but since you can't comply,
'Tis my misfortune that I mention'd it;
For had I not, Alonzo would indeed
Have died, as now; but not by your decree.

CARLOS.

By my decree! Do I decree his death?
I do——Shall I then lead her to his arms?
O! which side shall I take? be stabb'd? or—stab?
'Tis equal death, a choice of agonies.——
Ah, no! all other agonies are ease
To one—O Leonora!—Never, never!
Go, Zanga, go; defer the dreadful trial,
Though but a day; something perchance may happen
To soften all to friendship, and to love:
Go; stop my friend; let me not see him now;
But save us from an interview of death.

ZANGA.

My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you.——
If I not bring him, may Alonzo prosper! [*Aside.*
[*Exit* Zanga.

CARLOS.

What is this world?—Thy school, O misery!
Our only lesson is to learn to suffer;
And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.
Though deep my pangs, and heavy at my heart,
My comfort is, each moment takes away
A grain at least from the dead load that's on me,
And gives a nearer prospect of the grave.
But put it most severely—should I live——
Live long—Alas! there is no length in time;
Not in thy time, O man! What's fourscore years?
Nay, what indeed the age of time itself,
Since cut from out eternity's wide round?
Away then! To a mind resolv'd and wise,

There is an impotence in misery,
Which makes me smile, when all its shafts are in me.
Yet Leonora——She can make time long;
Its nature alter, as she alter'd mine:
While in the lustre of her charms I lay,
Whole summer suns roll'd unperceiv'd away;
I years for days, and days for moments told,
And was surpris'd to hear that I grew old;
Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,
And every moment is an age of pain.

[*As he is going out, Enter* Zanga *and* Alonzo, Zanga *stops* Carlos.

ZANGA.

Is this Don Carlos? This the boasted friend?
How can you turn your back upon his sadness?
Look on him; and then leave him, if you can.
Whose sorrows thus depress him? Not his own:
This moment he could wed without your leave.

CARLOS.

I cannot yield, nor can I bear his griefs.
Alonzo! [*Going to him, and taking his hand.*

ALONZO.

O Carlos!

CARLOS.

Pray, forbear.

ALONZO.

Art thou undone, and shall Alonzo smile?
Alonzo! who perhaps in some degree
Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate?
I was deputed guardian of thy love;

But, O! I loved myself. Pour down, Afflictions!
On this devoted head; make me your mark;
And be the world by my example taught,
How sacred it should hold the name of friend!

CARLOS.

You charge yourself unjustly: well I know
The only cause of my severe affliction.
Alvarez, curs'd Alvarez—So much anguish,
Felt for so small a failure, is one merit
Which faultless virtue wants. The crime was mine,
Who plac'd thee there, where only thou couldst fail;
Though well I knew that dreadful post of honour
I gave thee to maintain. Ah! who could bear
Those eyes unhurt? The wounds myself have felt,
Which wounds alone should cause me to condemn thee,
They plead in thy excuse; for I too strove
To shun those fires, and found 'twas not in man.

ALONZO.

You cast in shades the failures of a friend,
And soften all; but think not you deceive me:
I know my guilt; and I implore your pardon,
As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.

CARLOS.

Pardon for him who, but this morning, threw
Fair Leonora from his heart, all bath'd
In ceaseless tears, and blushing with her love?
Who, like a rose-leaf, wet with morning dew,
Would have stuck close, and clung for ever there?
But 'twas in thee, through fondness to thy friend,

To shut thy bosom against ecstasies;
For which, whilst this pulse beats, it beats to thee;
While this blood flows, it flows for my Alonzo;
And every wish is level'd at thy joy.

ZANGA. [*to* Alonzo.]

My lord, my lord, this is your time to speak.

ALONZO. [*to* Zanga.]

Because he's kind? It therefore is the worst;
For 'tis his kindness which I fear to hurt:
Shall the same moment see him sink in woes,
And me providing for a flood of joys,
Rich in the plunder of his happiness?
No; I may die; but I can never speak.

CARLOS. [*aside.*]

Now, now it comes! they are concerting it;
The first word strikes me dead—O Leonora!
And shall another taste her fragrant breath?
Who knows what after-time may bring to pass?
Fathers may change, and I may wed her still.

ALONZO. [*to* Zanga.]

Do I not see him quite possess'd with anguish,
Which, like a dæmon, writhes him to and fro;
And shall I pour in new? No, fond desire;
No, love! One pang at parting, and farewell:
I have no other love but Carlos now.

CARLOS.

Alas, my friend! why, with such eager grasps,
Dost press my hand, and weep upon my cheek?

ALONZO.

If, after death, our forms (as some believe)

Shall be transparent, naked every thought,
And friends meet friends, and read each other's hearts,
Thou'lt know, one day, that thou wast held most dear.
Farewell.

CARLOS.

Alonzo, stay—He cannot speak—[*Holds him.*
Lest it should grieve me—Shall I be outdone?
And lose in glory, as I lose in love? [*Aside.*
I take it much unkindly, my Alonzo,
You think so meanly of me, not to speak,
When, well I know, your heart is near to bursting.
Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

ALONZO.

There, there it is, my friend; it cuts me there.
How dreadful is it, to a generous mind,
To ask, when sure it cannot be denied!

CARLOS.

How greatly thought! In all he tow'rs above me. [*Aside.*
Then you confess you would ask something of me.

ALONZO.

No, on my soul.

ZANGA. [*to* Alonzo.]

Then lose her.

CARLOS.

Glorious spirit!
Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
By heaven, I envy him his agonies.
Why was not mine the most illustrious lot,

Of starting at one action from below,
And flaming up into consummate greatness?
Ha! Angels strengthen me!—It shall be so——
I can't want strength. Great actions, once conceiv'd,
Strengthen like wine and animate the soul,
And call themselves to being. [*Aside*]—My Alonzo!
Since thy great soul disdains to make request,
Receive with favour that I make to thee.

ALONZO.

What means my Carlos?

CARLOS.

Pray observe me well:
Fate and Alvarez tore her from my heart;
And, plucking up my love, they had well nigh
Pluck'd up life too; for they were twin'd together:
Of that no more—What now does reason bid?
I cannot wed——Farewell my happiness;
But, O my soul! with care provide for hers:
In life, how weak! how helpless is a woman!
Soon hurt, in happiness itself unsafe,
And often wounded, while she plucks the rose;
So properly the object of affliction,
That heaven is pleas'd to make distress become her,
And dresses her most amiably in tears.
Take then my heart in dowry with the fair;
Be thou her guardian, and thou must be mine;
Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
With thy surrounding arms—Do this; and then
Set down the liberty and life thou gav'st me

As little things, as essays of thy goodness,
And rudiments of friendship so divine.

ALONZO.

There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me,
Which with thy foes would render thee ador'd:
But have a care; nor think I can be pleas'd
With any thing that lays in pains for thee:
Thou dost dissemble, and thy heart's in tears.

CARLOS.

My heart's in health, my spirits dance their round,
And at my eye pleasure looks out in smiles.

ALONZO.

And canst thou, canst thou part with Leonora?

CARLOS.

I do not part with her; I give her thee.

ALONZO.

O Carlos!

CARLOS.

Don't distrust me; I'm sincere;
Nor is it more than simple justice in me:
This morn didst thou resign her for my sake;
I but perform a virtue learnt from thee;
Discharge a debt, and pay her to thy wishes.

ALONZO.

Ah! how?——But think not words were ever made
For such occasions: Silence, tears, embraces,
Are languid eloquence: I'll seek relief
In absence from the pain of so much goodness;
There thank the bless'd above, thy sole superiors,
Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee. [*Exit.*

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

Thus far success has crown'd my boldest hope:
My next care is to hasten these new nuptials;
And then my master-works begin to play.
Why that was greatly done, without one sigh [*To* Car.
To carry such a glory to its period.

CARLOS.

Too soon thou praisest me. He's gone; and now
I must unsluice my over-burden'd heart,
And let it flow: I would not grieve my friend
With tears, nor interrupt my great design;
Great, sure, as ever human breast durst think of.
But now my sorrows, long with pain suppress'd,
Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
O'erswell all bounds, and bear e'en life away:
So, till the day was won, the Greek renown'd,
With anguish wore the arrow in his wound;
Then drew the shaft from out his tortur'd side,
Let gush the torrent of his blood, and died.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter ZANGA *and* ISABELLA.

ZANGA.

O Joy, thou welcome stranger! twice three years
I have not felt thy vital beam; but now
It warms my veins, and plays around my heart;
A fiery instinct lifts me from the ground,
And I could mount——The spirits numberless
Of my dear countrymen, which yesterday
Left their poor bleeding bodies on the field,
Are all assembled here, and o'er inform me——
O bridegroom! great indeed thy present bliss;
Yet e'en by me unenvied; for be sure
It is thy last, thy last smile, that which now
Sits on thy cheek; enjoy it whilst thou mayst;
Anguish, and groans, and death, bespeak to-morrow.
My Isabella!

ISABELLA.

What commands my Moor?

ZANGA.

My fair ally! my lovely minister!
'Twas well Alvarez, by my arts impell'd,
(To plunge Don Carlos in the last despair,
And so prevent all future molestation)
Finish'd the nuptials soon as he resolv'd them;
This conduct ripen'd all for me, and ruin.

Scarce had the priest the holy rite perform'd,
When I, by sacred inspiration, forg'd
That letter, which I trusted to thy hand;
That letter, which, in glowing terms, conveys,
From happy Carlos to fair Leonora,
The most profound acknowledgment of heart
For wondrous transports, which he never knew.
This is a good subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

ISABELLA.

I quickly dropp'd it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

ZANGA.

With a lucky hand;
For soon Alonzo found it. I observ'd him
From out my secret stand: He took it up;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierc'd his eye,
Started, and, trembling, dropp'd it on the ground.
Pale and aghast a while my victim stood,
Disguised a sigh or two, and puff'd them from him;
Then rubb'd his brow, and took it up again:
At first he look'd as if he meant to read it;
But, check'd by rising fears, he crush'd it thus;
And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

ISABELLA.

But if he read it not, it cannot sting him;
At least not mortally.

ZANGA.

At first I thought it so;

But farther thought informs me otherwise,
And turns this disappointment to account.
He more shall credit it, because unseen,
(If 'tis unseen,) as thou anon mayst find.

ISABELLA.

That would indeed commend my Zanga's skill.

ZANGA.

This, Isabella, is Don Carlos' picture;
Take it, and so dispose of it, that, found,
It may rise up a witness of her love,
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elsewhere, as shall best promote our end.

ISABELLA.

I'll weigh it as its consequence requires;
Then do my utmost to deserve your smile. [*Exit* Isab.

ZANGA.

Is that Alonzo prostrate on the ground?——
Now he starts up like flame from sleeping embers,
And wild distraction glares from either eye.
If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
How will the fulness of the tempest tear him!

Enter Alonzo.

ALONZO.

And yet it cannot be—I am deceiv'd——
I injure her: She wears the face of heaven.

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

He doubts.

ALONZO.

I dare not look on this again:
If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,

Had such effect, so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all to pieces.
It cannot—Ha! it must, it must be true. [*Starts.*

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

Hold there, and we succeed. He has descry'd me,
And (for he thinks I love him) will unfold
His aching heart, and rest it on my counsel.
I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure.

ALONZO.

Hold, Zanga; turn.

ZANGA.

My lord.

ALONZO.

Shut close the door,
That not a spirit find an entrance here.

ZANGA.

My lord's obey'd.

ALONZO.

I see that thou art frighted:
If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpions, stings.

ZANGA.

If I do love, my lord!

ALONZO.

Come near me; let me rest upon thy bosom;
(What pillow like the bosom of a friend?)
For I am sick at heart.

ZANGA.

Speak, sir, O speak,
And take me from the rack.

ALONZO.

And is there need
Of words? Behold a wonder! See my tears!

ZANGA.

I feel them too! Heaven grant my senses fail me!
I rather would lose them, than have this real.

ALONZO.

Go, take a round through all things in thy thought,
And find that one; for there is only one
Which could extort my tears; find that, and tell
Thyself my mis'ry, and spare me the pain.

ZANGA.

Sorrow can think but ill—I am bewilder'd;
I know not where I am.

ALONZO.

Think, think no more;
It ne'er can enter in an honest heart.
I'll tell thee then—I cannot——Yet I do,
By wanting force to give it utterance.

ZANGA.

Speak: ease your heart; its throbs will break your bosom.

ALONZO.

I am most happy; mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
And great men make their fortunes of my smiles.
O curse of curses! in the lap of blessing
To be most curst!——My Leonora 's false!

ZANGA.

Save me, my lord.

ALONZO.

My Leonora's false. [*Gives him the letter.*

ZANGA.

Then heav'n has lost its image here on earth.

[*While* Zanga *reads the letter, he trembles, and shews the utmost concern.*

ALONZO.

Good-natur'd man? He makes my pains his own.
I durst not read it; but I read it now
In thy concern.

ZANGA.

Did you not read it then?

ALONZO.

Mine eye just touch'd it, and could bear no more.

ZANGA. [*tears the letter.*]

Thus perish all that gives Alonzo pain.

ALONZO.

Why didst thou tear it?

ZANGA.

Think of it no more:
'Twas your mistake; and groundless are your fears.

ALONZO.

And didst thou tremble then for my mistake?
Or give the whole contents; or by the pangs
That feed upon my heart, thy life's in danger.

ZANGA.

Is this Alonzo's language to his Zanga?
Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here:
For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal it?
Wherefore this rage? Because I seek your peace?
I have no interest in suppressing it,

But what good-natur'd tenderness for you
Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart
That will be rent in two; not mine the fame
That will be damn'd, though all the world should know it.

ALONZO.

Then my worst fears are true; and life is past.

ZANGA.

What has the rashness of my passion utter'd?
I know not what; but rage is our distraction,
And all its words are wind—Yet sure, I think,
I nothing own'd—But grant I did confess,
What is a letter? Letters may be forg'd.
For heaven's sweet sake, my lord, lift up your heart:
Some foe to your repose——

ALONZO.

So Heav'n look on me,
As I can't find the man I have offended.

ZANGA.

Indeed! [*aside*]—Our innocence is not our shield:
They take offence, who have not been offended
They seek our ruin too, who speak us fair;
And death is often ambush'd in our smiles.
We know not whom we have to fear. 'Tis certain,
A letter may be forg'd; and in a point
Of such a dreadful consequence as this,
One would rely on nought that *might* be false—
Think; have you any other cause to doubt her?——
Away; you can find none: Resume your spirit,
All's well again.

ALONZO.

O that it were!

ZANGA.

It is;

For who would credit that, which, credited,
Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,
Without such proofs as cannot be withstood?
Has she not ever been to virtue train'd?
Is not her fame as spotless as the sun,
Her sex's envy, and the boast of Spain?

ALONZO.

O Zanga! it is that confounds me most,
That full in opposition to appearance——

ZANGA.

No more, my lord; for you condemn yourself.
What is absurdity, but to believe
Against appearance?—You can't yet, I find,
Subdue your passion to your better sense;——
And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me:
'Tis fit our indiscretions should be check'd,
With some degrees of pain.

ALONZO.

What indiscretion?

ZANGA.

Come, you must bear to hear your faults from me.
Had you not sent Don Carlos to the court
The night before the battle, that foul slave,
Who forg'd the senseless scroll which gives you pain,
Had wanted footing for his villainy.

ALONZO.

I sent him not.

ZANGA.

Not send him!—Ha!—That strikes me.
I thought he came on message to the king:
Is there another cause could justify
His shunning danger, and the promis'd fight?
But I perhaps may think too rigidly;
So long an absence, and impatient love——

ALONZO.

In my confusion, that had quite escap'd me:
By heaven, my wounded soul does bleed afresh;
'Tis clear as day——For Carlos is so brave,
He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger,
And is enamour'd of the face of death:
How then could he decline the next day's battle,
But for the transports? O, it must be so——
Inhuman, by the loss of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend!

ZANGA.

You wrong him:
He knew not of your love.

ALONZO.

Ha!

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

That stings home.

ALONZO.

Indeed he knew not of my treacherous love—
Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest:
Th' eternal law of things declares it true,
Which calls for judgments on distinguish'd guilt,
And loves to make our crime our punishment.
Love is my torture; love was first my crime:

For she was his, my friend's, and he (O horror!)
Confided all in me. O sacred faith!
How dearly I abide thy violation!

ZANGA.

Were then their loves far gone?

ALONZO.

The father's will
There bore a total sway; and he, as soon
As news arriv'd that Carlos' fleet was seen
From off our coast, fir'd with the love of gold,
Determin'd that the very sun which saw
Carlos' return, should see his daughter wed.

ZANGA.

Indeed, my lord! Then you must pardon me,
If I presume to mitigate the crime:
Consider, strong allurements soften guilt;
Long was his absence, ardent was his love,
At midnight his return, the next day destin'd
For his espousals.——'Twas a strong temptation.

ALONZO.

Temptation!

ZANGA.

'Twas but gaining of one night.

ALONZO.

One night!

ZANGA.

That crime could ne'er return again.

ALONZO.

Again! By heaven, thou dost insult thy lord.
"Temptation! One night gain'd!" O stings and death!
And am I then undone? Alas, my Zanga!

And dost thou own it too? Deny it still,
And rescue me one moment from distraction.

ZANGA.

My lord, I hope the best.

ALONZO.

False, foolish hope,
And insolent to me! Thou know'st it false;
It is as glaring as the noon-tide sun.
Devil! this morning, after three years' coldness,
To rush at once into a passion for me!
'Twas time to feign; 'twas time to get another,
When her first fool was sated with her beauties.

ZANGA.

What says my lord? Did Leonora then
Never before disclose her passion for you?

ALONZO.

Never.

ZANGA.

Throughout the whole three years?

ALONZA.

O never! never!—
Why, Zanga, shouldst thou strive? 'Tis all in vain;
Though thy soul labours, it can find no reed
For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down
Ten thousand thousand fathoms in despair.

ZANGA.

Hold, sir; I'll break your fall—Wave every fear,
And be a man again—Had he enjoy'd her,
Be most assur'd, he had resign'd her to you
With less reluctance.

ALONZO.

Ha! resign her to me!——
Resign her! Who resign'd her?—Double death!
How could I doubt so long? My heart is broke:
First love her to distraction; then resign her!

ZANGA.

But was it not with utmost agony?

ALONZO.

Grant that, he still resign'd her; that's enough.
Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?
Tear out his heart?—She was his heart no more——
Nor was it with reluctance he resign'd her.
By heaven, he ask'd, he courted me, to wed:
I thought it strange; 'tis now no longer so.

ZANGA.

Was 't his request? Are you right sure of that?
I fear the letter was not all a tale.

ALONZO.

A tale! there 's proof equivalent to sight.

ZANGA.

I should distrust my sight on this occasion.

ALONZO.

And so should I; by heaven, I think I should.
What! Leonora the divine, by whom
We guess'd at angels? O! I 'm all confusion.

ZANGA.

You now are too much ruffled to think clearly.
Since bliss and horror, life and death, hang on it,

Go to your chamber; there maturely weigh
Each circumstance; consider, above all,
That it is jealousy's peculiar nature
To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much; and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd.

ALONZO.

Had I ten thousand lives, I 'd give them all
To be deceiv'd: I fear 'tis doomsday with me;
And yet she seem'd so pure, that I thought heaven
Borrow'd her form for Virtue's self to wear,
To gain her lovers with the sons of men. [*Exit* Alon.

Enter ISABELLA.

ZANGA.

Thus far it works auspiciously. My patient
Thrives, underneath my hand, in misery:
He 's gone to think; that is, to be distracted.

ISABELLA.

I overheard your conference, and saw you,
To my amazement, tear the letter.

ZANGA.

There,
There, Isabella, I outdid myself:
For, tearing it, I not secure it only
In its first force, but superadd a new:
For, who can now the character examine
To cause a doubt, much less detect the fraud?
And, after tearing it, as loth to shew
The foul contents, if I should swear it now

A forgery, my lord would disbelieve me;
Nay, more would disbelieve, the more I swore:—
But is the picture happily dispos'd of?

ISABELLA.

It is.

ZANGA.

That's well—Ah! what is well? O pang to think!
O dire necessity! Is this my province?
Whither, my soul, ah! whither art thou sunk
Beneath thy sphere? Erewhile, far, far above
Such little arts, dissemblings, falsehoods, frauds,
The trash of villainy itself, which falls
To cowards, and poor wretches wanting bread:
Does this become a soldier? this become
Whom armies follow'd, and a people lov'd?
My martial glory withers at the thought:
But great my end; and since there are no other,
These means are just; they shine with borrow'd light,
Illustrious from the purpose they pursue.
And greater sure my merit, who, to gain
A point sublime, can such a task sustain;
To wade through ways obscene, my honour bend,
And shock my nature, to attain my end:
Late time shall wonder; that my joys will raise;
For wonder is involuntary praise.

ACT IV.

Enter ALONZO *and* ZANGA.

ALONZO.

O WHAT a pain to think! when every thought,
Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
And reason knits th' inextricable toil,
In which herself is taken! I am lost;
Poor insect that I am, I am involv'd,
And bury'd in the web myself have wrought!
One argument is balanc'd by another,
And reason reason meets in doubtful fight,
And proofs are countermin'd by equal proofs.
No more I 'll bear this battle of the mind,
This inward anarchy; but find my wife,
And, to her trembling heart presenting death,
Force all the secret from her.

ZANGA.

O forbear!
You totter on the very brink of ruin.

ALONZO.

What dost thou mean?

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

That will discover all,
And kill my hopes: What can I think or do?

ALONZO.

What dost thou murmur?

ZANGA.

Force the secret from her!
What's perjury to such a crime as this?
Will she confess it then? O groundless hope!
But rest assur'd, she'll make this accusation,
Or false or true, your ruin with the king;
Such is her father's power.

ALONZO.

No more; I care not:
Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.

ZANGA.

But for what better will you change this load?
Grant you should know it, would not that be worse?

ALONZO.

No; it would cure me of my mortal pangs,
By hatred and contempt: I should despise her;
And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.

ZANGA.

Ah! were I sure of that, my lord——

ALONZO.

What then?

ZANGA.

You should not hazard life to gain the secret.

ALONZO.

What dost thou mean? Thou know'st I'm on the rack:

I'll not be play'd with; speak, if thou hast aught,
Or I this instant fly to Leonora.

ZANGA.

That is, to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite so far gone in guilt to suffer it;
Tho' gone too far, heaven knows.—'Tis I am guilty—
I have took pains, as you I know observ'd,
To hinder you from diving in the secret,
And turn'd aside your thoughts from the detection.

ALONZO.

Thou dost confound me.

ZANGA.

I confound myself;
And frankly own, though to my shame I own it,
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The secret out, and made me own my crime.

ALONZO.

Speak quickly; Zanga, speak.

ZANGA.

Not yet, dread sir;
First I must be assur'd, that if you find
The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assur'd me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.

ALONZO.

O! 'twill, by heaven!

ZANGA.

Alas! I fear it much,
And scarce can hope so far; but I of this

Exact your solemn oath, that you 'll abstain
From all self-violence, and save my lord.

ALONZO.

I trebly swear.

ZANGA.

You 'll bear it like a man?

ALONZO.

A god.

ZANGA.

Such have you been to me; these tears confess it;
And pour'd forth miracles of kindness on me:
And what amends is now within my pow'r,
But to confess, expose myself to justice,
And, as a blessing, claim my punishment?
Know then, Don Carlos—

ALONZO.

Oh!

ZANGA.

You cannot bear it.

ALONZO.

Go on; I 'll have it, though it blast mankind:
I 'll have it all, and instantly.——Go on.

ZANGA.

Don Carlos did return at dead of night——

Enter LEONORA.

LEONORA.

My lord Alonzo, you are absent from us,
And quite undo our joy.

ALONZO.

I'll come, my love:
Be not our friends deserted by us both;
I'll follow you this moment.

LEONORA.

My good lord,
I do observe severity of thought
Upon your brow. Aught hear you from the Moors?

ALONZO.

No, my delight.

LEONORA.

What then employ'd your mind?

ALONZO.

Thou, love, and only thou; so Heaven befriend me,
As other thought can find no entrance here.

LEONORA.

How good in you, my lord, whom nations' cares
Solicit, and a world in arms obeys,
To drop one thought on me?

ALONZO. [*he shews the utmost impatience.*]

Dost thou then prize it?

LEONORA.

Do you then ask it?

ALONZO.

Know then, to thy comfort,
Thou hast me all; my throbbing heart is full
With thee alone; I've thought of nothing else;
Nor shall, I from my soul believe, till death.
My life, our friends expect thee.

LEONORA.

I obey. [*Exit* Leon.

ALONZO.

Is that the face of curs'd hypocrisy?
If she is guilty, stars are made of darkness,
And beauty shall no more belong to heaven——
" Don Carlos did return at dead of night:"—
Proceed, good Zanga; so thy tale began.

ZANGA.

Don Carlos did return at dead of night;
That night, by chance (ill chance for me) did I
Command the watch that guards the palace gate:
He told me he had letters for the king,
Dispatch'd from you.

ALONZO.

The villain lied.

ZANGA.

My lord,
I pray forbear—Transported at his sight,
After so long a bondage, and your friend,
(Who could suspect him of an artifice?)
No farther I enquir'd; but let him pass,
False to my trust; at least imprudent in it.
Our watch reliev'd, I went into the garden,
As is my custom when the night's serene,
And took a moon-light walk; when soon I heard
A rustling in an arbour that was near me:
I saw two lovers in each other's arms,
Embracing and embrac'd: Anon the man
Arose; and falling back some paces from her,

Gaz'd ardently a while; then rush'd at once;
And throwing all himself into her bosom,
There softly sigh'd; "O night of ecstasy!
When shall we meet again?"——Don Carlos then
Led Leonora forth.

ALONZO.

O! O my heart! [*He sinks into a chair.*

ZANGA.

Groan on, and with the sound refresh my soul.
'Tis through his heart; his knees smite one another:
'Tis through his brain; his eye-balls roll in anguish.
[*Aside.*
My lord, my lord, why will you rack my soul?
Speak to me; let me know that you still live.
Do you not know me, sir? Pray look upon me:
You think too deeply: I am your own Zanga,
So lov'd, so cherish'd, and so faithful to you.—
Where start you in such fury? Nay, my lord,
For heaven's sake, sheath your sword! What can this mean?
Fool that I was, to trust you with the secret;
And you unkind; to break your word with me.
O passion for a woman! On the ground?
Where is your boasted courage? Where your scorn,
And prudent rage, that was to cure your grief,
And chase your love-bred agonies away?
Rise, sir, for honour's sake. Why should the Moors,
Why should the vanquish'd triumph?

ALONZO.

Would to heaven,
That I were lower still! O she was all!

My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
All stoop'd to her; my blood was her possession:
Deep in the secret foldings of my heart,
She liv'd with life, and far the dearer she:
But—and no more—set nature in a blaze;
Give her a fit of jealousy—away——
To think on 't is the torment of the damn'd;
And not to think on 't is impossible.
How fair the cheek, that first alarm'd my soul!
How bright the eye that sets it on a flame!
How soft the breast, on which I laid my peace
For years to slumber, unawak'd by care!
How fierce the transport! how sublime the bliss!—
How deep, how black, the horror and despair!

ZANGA.

You said you 'd bear it like a man.

ALONZO.

I do.
Am I not most distracted?

ZANGA.

Pray be calm.

ALONZO.

As hurricanes: Be thou assur'd of that.

ZANGA.

Is this the wise Alonzo?

ALONZO.

Villain, no:
He died in the arbour; he was murder'd there:
I am his dæmon, though—my wife! my wife!——

ZANGA.

Alas! he weeps.

ALONZO.

Go, dig her grave.

ZANGA.

My lord!

ALONZO.

But that her blood's too hot, I would carouse it
Around my bridal-board.

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

And I would pledge thee.

ALONZO.

But I may talk too fast. Pray let me think,
And reason mildly.—Wedded and undone
Before one night descends—O hasty evil!
What friend to comfort me in this extreme!
Where's Carlos? Why is Carlos absent from me?
Does he know what has happen'd?

ZANGA.

My good lord!

ALONZO.

O depth of horrors!—He! my bosom friend!

ZANGA.

Alas! compose yourself, my lord.

ALONZO.

To death.
"Gaze on her with both eyes so ardently!"
Give them the vultures; tear them all in pieces!

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

Most excellent!

ALONZO.

Hark! you can keep a secret.
In yonder arbour bound with jessamin;

Who's that? What villain's that? Unhand her—
Murder!
Tear them asunder—Murder!—How they grind
My heart betwixt them!—O let go my heart!
Yet let it go!—" Embracing and embrac'd!"
O pestilence!—Who let him in? A traitor.
[*Goes to stab* Zanga; *he prevents him.*
Alas! my head turns round, and my limbs fail me.

ZANGA.

My lord!

ALONZO.

O villain, villain, most accurs'd!
If thou didst know it, why didst let me wed?

ZANGA.

Hear me, my lord; your anger will abate:
I knew it not; I saw them in the garden;
But saw no more than you might well expect
To see in lovers destin'd for each other:
By heaven, I thought their meeting innocent.
Who could suspect fair Leonora's virtue,
Till after-proofs conspir'd to blacken it?
Sad proofs, which came too late; which broke not out
(Eternal curses on Alvarez' haste!)
'Till holy rites had made the wanton yours;
And then, I own, I labour'd to conceal it,
In duty, and compassion to your peace.

ALONZO.

Live now; be damn'd hereafter; for I want thee.
" O night of ecstasy!"—Ha! was 't not so?
I will enjoy this murder——Let me think—
The jess'min bow'r; 'tis secret and remote:

Go, wait me there, and take thy dagger with thee.

[*Exit* Zanga.

How the sweet sound still sings within my ear!
"When shall we meet again?" To-night, in hell.

[*As he is going out, Enter* Leonora.

Ha! I'm surpris'd; I stagger at her charms.
O angel-devil!—Shall I stab her now?
No, it shall be as I had first determin'd:
To kill her now were half my vengeance lost;
Then I must now dissemble—if I can.

LEONORA.

My lord, excuse me: see, a second time
I come in embassy from all your friends,
Whose joys are languid, uninspir'd by you.

ALONZO.

This moment, Leonora, I was coming
To thee, and all——But sure, or I mistake,
Or thou canst well inspire my friends with joy.

LEONORA.

Why sighs my lord?

ALONZO.

I sigh'd not, Leonora.

LEONORA.

I thought you did: Your sighs are mine, my lord,
And I shall feel them all.

ALONZO.

Dost flatter me?

LEONORA.

If my regards for you are flattery,
Full far indeed I stretch'd the compliment
In this day's solemn rite.

ALONZO.

What rite?

LEONORA.

You sport me.

ALONZO.

Indeed I do; my heart is full of mirth.

LEONORA.

And so is mine—I look on cheerfulness,
As on the health of virtue.

ALONZO.

Virtue!——Damn——

LEONORA.

What says my lord?

ALONZO.

Thou art exceeding fair.

LEONORA.

Beauty alone is but of little worth;
But when the soul and body of a piece,
Both shine alike; then they obtain a price,
And are a fit reward for gallant actions,
Heaven's pay on earth for such great souls as yours:
If fair and innocent, I am your due.

ALONZO. [*aside.*]

Innocent!

LEONORA.

How!—my lord, I interrupt you.

ALONZO.

No, my best life; I must not part with thee:
This hand is mine. O! what a hand is here
So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost!

LEONORA.

In tears, my lord?

ALONZO.

What less can speak my joy?
I gaze, and I forget my own existence;
'Tis all a vision; my head swims in heaven.
Wherefore, O! wherefore, this expence of beauty?
And wherefore? O!——
Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
And drink in all my being from thine eyes;
And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,
And hurl destruction——

LEONORA.

How, my lord! What mean you?
Acquaint me with the secret of your heart,
Or cast me out for ever from your love.

ALONZO.

Art thou concern'd for me?

LEONORA.

My lord, you fright me.
Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour?
I am ill-us'd, my lord; I must not bear it.
Why, when I woo your hand, is it denied me?
Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun me?
Nay, my good lord, I have a title here;
[*Taking his hand.*
And I will have it. Am I not your wife?
Have I not just authority to know
That heart, which I have purchas'd with my own?
Lay it before me then; it is my due.

Unkind Alonzo, though I might demand it,
Behold, I kneel! See, Leonora kneels,
And deigns to be a beggar for her own!
Tell me the secret: I conjure you tell me.
The bride foregoes the homage of her day;
Alvarez' daughter trembles in the dust:
Speak then; I charge you speak, or I expire,
And load you with my death. My lord—my lord!

ALONZO.

Ha! ha! ha! [*He breaks from her, and she sinks upon the floor.*

LEONORA.

Are these the joys which fondly I conceiv'd?
And is it thus a wedded life begins?
What did I part with, when I gave my heart?
I knew not that all happiness went with it.
Why did I leave my tender father's wing,
And venture into love? That maid that loves,
Goes out to sea upon a shatter'd plank,
And puts her trust in miracles for safety.
Where shall I sigh? Where pour out my complaint?
He that should hear, should succour, should redress,
He is the source of all.

ALONZO.

Go to thy chamber;
I soon will follow: That which now disturbs thee,
Shall be clear'd up, and thou shalt not condemn me.
[*Exit* Leonora.
O, how like innocence she looks! What, stab her,
And rush into her blood?—I never can:

In her, guilt shines, and nature holds my hand.
How then? Why thus—No more; it is determin'd.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA. [*aside.*]
I fear his heart has fail'd him. She must die.
Can I not rouse the snake that's in his bosom,
To sting out human nature, and effect it?

ALONZO.
This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,
Those skies, through which it rolls, must all have end.
What then is man? The smallest part of nothing.
Day buries day; month, month; and year, the year:
Our life is but a chain of many deaths.
Can then death's self be fear'd? Our life much rather:
Life is the desert, life the solitude;
Death joins us to the great majority:
'Tis to be born to Plato's and to Cæsar;
'Tis to be great for ever:
'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition, then, to die.

ZANGA.
I think, my lord, you talk'd of death.

ALONZO.
I did.

ZANGA.
I give you joy; then Leonora 's dead.

ALONZO.
No, Zanga, no; the greatest guilt is mine:
'Tis mine, who might have mark'd his midnight visit;
Who might have mark'd his tameness to resign her;

Who might have mark'd her sudden turn of love
These, and a thousand tokens more; and yet
(For which the saints absolve my soul!) did wed.

ZANGA.

Where does this tend?

ALONZO.

To shed a woman's blood
Would stain my sword, and make my wars inglorious;
But just resentment to myself, bears in it
A stamp of greatness above vulgar minds:
He who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And take a flight at heaven.

ZANGA.

Alas! my lord,
'Tis not your reason, but her beauty, finds
Those arguments, and throws you on your sword:
You cannot close an eye that is so bright;
You cannot strike a breast that is so soft;
That has ten thousand ecstasies in store—
For Carlos?—No, my lord; I mean for you.

ALONZO.

O! thro' my heart and marrow! Pr'ythee spare me;
Nor more upbraid the weakness of thy lord:
I own, I try'd, I quarrel'd with my heart,
And push'd it on, and bid it give her death;
But, O! her eyes struck first, and murder'd me.

ZANGA.

I know not what to answer to my lord.

Men are but men; we did not make ourselves:
Farewell then, my best lord, since you must die.
O that I were to share your monument,
And in eternal darkness close these eyes
Against those scenes which I am doom'd to suffer!

ALONZO.

What dost thou mean?

ZANGA.

And is it then unknown?
O grief of heart, to think that you should ask it!
Sure you distrust that ardent love I bear you,
Else could you doubt, when you are laid in dust—
But it will cut my poor heart through and through,
To see those revel on your sacred tomb,
Who brought you thither by their lawless loves:
For there they 'll revel, and exult to find
Him sleep so fast, who else would mar their joys.

ALONZO.

Distraction!—But Don Carlos, well thou know'st,
Is sheath'd in steel, and bent on other thoughts.

ZANGA.

I 'll work him to the murder of his friend.— [*Aside.*
Yes, till the fever of his blood returns,
Whilst her last kiss still glows upon his cheek.
But when he finds Alonzo is no more,
How will he rush, like lightning, to her arms!
There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul;
But not in grief—sad obsequies to thee——
But thou wilt be at peace, nor see, nor hear,
The burning kiss, the sigh of ecstasy,

Their throbbing hearts that jostle one another.
Thank heaven, these torments will be all my own.

ALONZO.

I 'll ease thee of that pain: Let Carlos die;
O'ertake him on the road, and see it done.
'Tis my command. [*Gives his signet.*

ZANGA.

I dare not disobey.

ALONZO.

My Zanga, now I have thy leave to die.

ZANGA.

Ah, sir, think, think again. Are all men buried
In Carlos' grave? You know not womankind:
When once the throbbing of the heart has broke
The modest zone, with which it first was tied,
Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.

ALONZO.

That thought has more of hell than had the former:
Another, and another, and another!
And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb!
I am convinc'd; I must not, will not, die.

ZANGA.

You cannot die; nor can you murder her.
What then remains? In nature no third way,
But to forget, and so to love again.

ALONZO.

Oh!

ZANGA.

If you forgive, the world will call you *good;*
If you forget, the world will call you *wise;*

If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you *very, very kind.*

ALONZO.

Zanga, I understand thee well. She dies;
Though my arm tremble at the stroke, she dies.

ZANGA.

That 's truly great. What think you 'twas set up
The Greek and Roman name in such a lustre,
But doing right in stern despite to nature,
Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
When great, august, and godlike justice call'd?
At Aulis, one pour'd out a daughter's life,
And gain'd more glory than by all his wars
Another slew a sister in just rage;
A third, the theme of all succeeding times,
Gave to the cruel axe a darling son:
Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,
As he at Carthage, an immortal name!
Yet there is one step left above them all,
Above their history, above their fable:
A wife, bride, mistress, unenjoy'd—Do that,
And tread upon the Greek and Roman glory.

ALONZO.

'Tis done—again new transports fire my brain:
I had forgot it; 'tis my bridal night:
Friend, give me joy; we must be gay together:
See that the festival be duly honour'd.
And when with garlands the full bowl is crown'd,
And music gives her elevating sound,

And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,
And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
Thou, Zanga, then my solemn friends invite,
From the dark realms of everlasting night;
Call vengeance, call the furies, call despair;
And death, our chief invited guest, be there;
He, with pale hand, shall lead the bride, and spread
Eternal curtains round our nuptial-bed. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

O PITIFUL! O terrible to sight!
Poor mangled shade, all cover'd o'er with wounds,
And so disguis'd with blood? Who murder'd thee?
Tell thy sad tale, and thou shalt be reveng'd.
Ha! Carlos?—Horror! Carlos?—O, away!
Go to thy grave, or let me sink to mine:
I cannot bear the sight—What sight?—Where am I?
There 's nothing here——If this was fancy's work,
She draws a picture strongly.——

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

Ha!—you 're pale.

ALONZO.

Is Carlos murder'd?

ZANGA.

I obey'd your order.
Six ruffians overtook him on the road;
He fought as he was wont, and four he slew;
Then sunk beneath a hundred wounds to death:
His last breath blest Alonzo, and desir'd
His bones might rest near yours.

ALONZO.

O Zanga! Zanga
But I'll not think; for I must act; and thinking
Would ruin me for action. O the medley
Of right and wrong! the chaos in my brain!
He should, and should not die—You should obey,
And not obey——It is a day of darkness,
Of contradictions, and of many deaths.
Where's Leonora then? Quick answer me;
I'm deep in horrors; I'll be deeper still.——
I find thy artifice did take effect,
And she forgives my late deportment to her.

ZANGA.

I told her, from your childhood you were wont,
On any great surprise, but chiefly then,
When cause of sorrow bore it company,
To have your passion shake the seat of reason;
A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er:
Then did I tell her of Don Carlos' death;
(Wisely suppressing by what means he fell)
And laid the blame on that. At first she doubted;
But such the honest artifice I us'd,
And such her ardent wish it should be true,
That she, at length, was fully satisfied.

ALONZO.

'Twas well she was. In our late interview,
My passion so far threw me from my guard,
(Methinks 'tis strange!) that, conscious of her guilt,
She saw not, through its thin disguise, my heart.

ZANGA.

But what design you, sir; and how?

ALONZO.

I'll tell thee.
Thus I 've ordain'd it: In the jess'min bow'r,
The place which she dishonour'd with her guilt,
There will I meet her: the appointment's made:
And calmly spread (for I can do it now)
The blackness of her crime before her sight;
And then, with all the cool solemnity
Of public justice, give her to the grave. [*Exit.*

ZANGA.

Why, get thee gone! Horror and night go with thee!
Sisters of Acheron, go hand in hand;
Go dance around the bow'r, and close them in;
And tell them, that I sent you to salute them!
Profane the ground; and for th' ambrosial rose,
And breath of jessamin, let hemlock blacken,
And deadly nightshade poison all the air!
For the sweet nightingale, may ravens croak,
Toads pant, and adders rustle through the leaves;
May serpents, winding up the trees, let fall
Their hissing necks upon them from above,
And mingle kisses—such as I should give them!
[*Exit.*

Scene.—The Bower.

LEONORA sleeping. Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

Ye amaranths! ye roses, like the morn!
Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange-groves!
Why do you smile? Why do you look so fair?
Are you not blasted as I enter in?
Yes; see how every flower lets fall its head!
How shudders every leaf without a wind!
How every green is as the ivy pale!
Did ever midnight ghosts assemble here?
Have these sweet echoes ever learnt to groan?
Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bower!
Know, in thy fragrant bosom thou receiv'st
A—murderer: O! I shall stain thy lilies,
And horror will usurp the seat of bliss.
So Lucifer broke into Paradise;
And soon damnation follow'd. [*He advances.*] Ha!
she sleeps——
The day's uncommon heat has overcome her:
Then take, my longing eyes, your last full gaze.
O, what a sight is here! How dreadful fair!
Who would not think that being innocent?
Where shall I strike? Who strikes her, strikes himself:
My own life-blood will issue at her wound.
O my distracted heart!—O cruel Heaven!
To give such charms as those, and then call man,
Mere man, to be your executioner.
Was it because it was too hard for you?

But see, she smiles! I never shall smile more;
It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss.
[*Going, he starts back.*
Ha! smile again! She dreams of him she loves:
Curse on her charms! I'll stab her through them all.
[*As he is going to strike, she wakes.*

LEONORA.

My lord, your stay was long; and yonder lull
Of falling waters tempted me to rest,
Dispirited with noon's excessive heat.

ALONZO.

Ye powers, with what an eye she mends the day!
While they were clos'd, I should have giv'n the blow.
[*Aside.*
O for a last embrace! and then for justice:
Thus Heaven and I shall both be satisfied.

LEONORA.

What says my lord?

ALONZO.

Why this Alonzo says:
If love were endless, men were gods; 'tis that
Does counterbalance travel, danger, pain——
'Tis Heaven's expedient to make mortals bear
The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.

LEONORA.

Alas! my lord, why talk you of the grave?
Your friend is dead; in friendship you sustain
A mighty loss; repair it with my love.

ALONZO.

Thy love? Thou piece of witchcraft!—I would say,
Thou brightest angel! I could gaze for ever.

Where hadst thou this? enchantress, tell me where?
Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
My blood to tumults, and turns round my brain!
E'en now thou swimm'st before me: I shall lose thee:
No, I will make thee sure, and clasp thee all.
Who turn'd this slender waist with so much art,
And shut perfection in so small a ring?
Who spread that pure expanse of white above,
On which the dazzled sight can find no rest;
But, drunk with beauty, wanders up and down
For ever, and for ever finds new charms?
But, O those eyes! those murderers! O whence,
Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs? From heaven?—
Thou didst; and 'tis religion to adore them.

LEONORA.

My best Alonzo, moderate your thought;
Extremes still fright me, though of love itself.

ALONZO.

Extremes, indeed! It hurried me away;
But I come home again—and now for justice——
And now for death—It is impossible——
Sure such were made by Heaven guiltless to sin,
Or in their guilt to laugh at punishment. [*Aside.*
I leave her to just Heaven.

[*Drops the dagger, and goes off.*

LEONORA.

Ha! a dagger!
What dost thou say, thou minister of death?
What dreadful tale dost tell me? Let me think.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA. [*aside.*]

Death to my towering hope! O fall from high!
My close long-labour'd scheme at once is blasted.
That dagger found will cause her to enquire;
Enquiry will discover all; my hopes
Of vengeance perish; I myself am lost——
Curse on the coward's heart! wither his hand,
Which held the steel in vain!—What can be done?—
Where can I fix?—That's something still—'twill breed
Fell rage and bitterness betwixt their souls,
Which may perchance grow up to greater evil;
If not, 'tis all I can——It shall be so———

LEONORA.

O Zanga! I am sinking in my fears!
Alonzo dropp'd this dagger as he left me;
And left me in a strange disorder too.
What can this mean? Angels preserve his life!

ZANGA.

Yours, madam; yours.

LEONORA.

What, Zanga, dost thou say?

ZANGA.

Carry you goodness then to such extremes,
So blinded to the faults of him you love,
That you perceive not he is jealous?

LEONORA.

Heavens!
And yet a thousand things recur that swear it.

What villain could inspire him with that thought?
It is not of the growth of his own nature.

ZANGA.

Some villain; who, hell knows; but he is jealous:
And 'tis most fit a heart so pure as yours
Do itself justice, and assert its honour,
And make him conscious of his stab to virtue.

LEONORA.

Jealous! it sickens at my heart. Unkind,
Ungenerous, groundless, weak, and insolent!
Why? wherefore? On what shadow of occasion?
'Tis fascination; 'tis the wrath of Heaven
For the collected crimes of all his race.
O how the great man lessens to my thought!
How could so mean a vice as jealousy,
Unnatural child of ignorance and guilt,
Which tears and feeds upon its parent's heart,
Live in a throng of such exalted virtues?
I scorn and hate—yet love him, and adore:
I cannot, will not, dare not, think it true,
Till from himself I know it. [*Exit.*

ZANGA.

This succeeds
Just to my wish. Now she with violence
Upbraids him; he, not doubting she is guilty,
Rages no less; and if on either side
The waves run high, there still lives hope of ruin.

[*Enter* Alonzo.

My lord——

ALONZO.

O Zanga! hold thy peace; I am no coward;
But Heaven itself did hold my hand; I felt it;
By the well-being of my soul, I did:
I'll think of vengeance at another season.

ZANGA.

My lord, her guilt——

ALONZO.

Perdition on thee, Moor,
For that one word! Ah! do not rouse that thought;
I have o'erwhelm'd it much as possible:
Away then; let us talk of other things:
I tell thee, Moor, I love her to distraction:
If 'tis my shame, why be it so——I love her;
Nor can I help it; 'tis impos'd upon me
By some superior and resistless power:
I could not hurt her to be lord of earth;
It shocks my nature like a stroke at Heaven.
Angels defend her, as if innocent!
But see my Leonora comes:—Be gone. [*Exit* Zanga.

[*Enter* Leonora.

O seen for ever, yet for ever new!
The conquer'd thou dost conquer o'er again,
Inflicting wound on wound.

LEONORA.

Alas, my lord!
What need of this to me?

ALONZO.

Ha! dost thou weep?

LEONORA.

Have I no cause?

ALONZO.

If love is thy concern,
Thou hast no cause; none ever lov'd like me.
But wherefore this? Is it to break my heart,
Which loses so much blood for every tear?

LEONORA.

Is it so tender?

ALONZO.

Is it not? O Heaven!
Doubt of my love? Why, I am nothing else;
It quite absorbs my every other passion.
O that this one embrace would last for ever!

LEONORA.

Could this man ever mean to wrong my virtue?
Could this man e'er design upon my life?
Impossible! I throw away the thought. [*Aside.*
These tears declare how much I taste the joy
Of being folded in your arms and heart;
My universe does lie within that space.
This dagger bore false witness. [*Shewing it.*

ALONZO.

Ha! my dagger!
It rouses horrid images: Away,
Away with it, and let us talk of love,
Plunge ourselves deep into the sweet illusion,
And hide us there from every other thought.

LEONORA.

It touches you.

ALONZO.

Let's talk of love.

LEONORA.

Of death.

ALONZO.

As thou lov'st happiness——

LEONORA.

Of murder.

ALONZO.

Rash.

Rash woman, yet forbear.

LEONORA.

Approve my wrongs!

ALONZO.

Then must I fly, for thy sake and my own.

LEONORA.

Nay, by my injuries, you first must hear me:
Stab me, then think it much to hear me groan!

ALONZO.

Heavens strike me deaf!

LEONORA.

It well may sting you home.

ALONZO.

Alas! thou quite mistak'st my cause of pain.
Yet, yet dismiss me! I am all in flames.

LEONORA.

Who has most cause? you, or myself? What act
Of my whole life encourag'd you to this?
Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?
You find me kind, and think me kind to all;
The weak, ungenerous error of your sex.
What could inspire the thought? We oft'nest judge
From our own hearts: And is yours then so frail,

It prompts you to conceive thus ill of me?
He that can stoop to harbour such a thought,
Deserves to find it true. [*Holding him.*

ALONZO.

O sex, sex, sex! [*Turning on her.*
The language of you all. Ill-fated woman!
Why hast thou forc'd me back into the gulf
Of agonies I had block'd up from thought?
I know the cause: thou saw'st me impotent
Erewhile to hurt thee, therefore thou turn'st on me:
But, by the pangs I suffer, to thy woe;
For, since thou hast replung'd me in my torture,
I will be satisfied.

LEONORA.

Be satisfied!

ALONZO.

Yes; thy own mouth shall witness it against thee;
I will be satisfied.

LEONORA.

Of what?

ALONZO.

Of what!
How dar'st thou ask that question? Woman, woman,
Weak and assur'd at once; thus 'tis for ever.
Who told thee that thy virtue was suspected?
Who told thee I design'd upon thy life?
You found the dagger, but that could not speak;
Nor did I tell thee: Who did tell thee then?
Guilt, conscious guilt.

LEONORA.

This to my face? O Heaven!

ALONZO.

This to thy very soul.

LEONORA.

Thou'rt not in earnest?

ALONZO.

Serious as death.

LEONORA.

Then Heaven have mercy on thee.
Till now, I struggled not to think it true;
I sought conviction, and would not believe it:
And dost thou force me? This shall not be borne:
Thou shalt repent this insult. [*Going.*

ALONZO.

Madam, stay:
Your passion's wise; 'tis a disguise for guilt;
'Tis my turn now to fix you here a while;
You, and your thousand arts, shall not escape me.

LEONORA.

Arts?

ALONZO.

Arts! Confess; for death is in my hand.

LEONORA.

'Tis in your words.

ALONZO.

Confess, confess, confess;
Nor tear my veins with passion to compel thee.

LEONORA.

I scorn to answer thee, presumptuous man!

ALONZO.

Deny then, and incur a fouler shame.
Where did I find this picture?

LEONORA.

Ha! Don Carlos?
By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own.

ALONZO.

I know it: but is vice so very rank,
That thou shouldst dare to dash it in my face?
Nature is sick of thee, abandon'd woman!

LEONORA.

Repent.

ALONZO.

Is that for me?

LEONORA.

Fall, ask my pardon.

ALONZO.

Astonishment!

LEONORA.

Dar'st thou persist to think I am dishonest?

ALONZO.

I know thee so.

LEONORA.

This blow then to thy heart——

[*She stabs herself, he endeavouring to prevent her.*

ALONZO.

Ho! Zanga! Isabella! Ho! She bleeds!
Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!

LEONORA.

This is the only way I would wound thee,
Though most unjust. Now think me guilty still.

Enter ISABELLA.

ALONZO.

Bear her to instant help: The world to save her!

LEONORA.

Unhappy man! well mayst thou gaze and tremble;
But fix thy terror and amazement right;
Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.
What hast thou done? Whom censur'd?—Leonora.
When thou hadst censur'd, thou wouldst save her life:
O inconsistent! Should I live in shame,
Or stoop to any other means but this,
T' assert my virtue? No; she who disputes,
Admits it possible she might be guilty:
While aught but truth could be my inducement to it,
While it might look like an excuse to thee,
I scorn'd to vindicate my innocence;
But now, I let thy rashness know, the wound
Which least I feel, is that my dagger made.

[Isabella *leads out* Leonora.

ALONZO.

Ha! Was this woman guilty?—and if not——
How my thought darkens that way! Grant, kind Heaven,
That she prove guilty, or give being end.
Is that my hope then?—Sure, the sacred dust
Of her that bore me trembles in its urn.
Is it in man the sore distress to bear,
When hope itself is blacken'd to despair?
When all the bliss I pant for, is to gain
In hell a refuge from severer pain? [*Exit* Alonzo.

Enter ZANGA.

ZANGA.

How stands the great account 'twixt me and vengeance?

Though much is paid, yet still it owes me much;
And I will not abate a single groan.——
Ha! that were well—but that were fatal too—
Why, be it so—Revenge so truly great
Would come too cheap, if bought with less than life.
Come death, come hell, then; 'tis resolv'd; 'tis done.

Enter ISABELLA.

ISABELLA.

Ah! Zanga, see me tremble: Has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill?—Poor Leonora—

ZANGA.

Welters in blood, and gasps for her last breath:
What then? We all must die.

ISABELLA.

Alonzo raves;
And in the tempest of his grief has thrice
Attempted on his life: At length, disarm'd,
He calls his friends that save him, his worst foes;
And importunes the skies for swift perdition.
Thus in his storm of sorrow. After pause,
He started up, and call'd aloud for Zanga:
For Zanga rav'd; and see, he seeks you here,
To learn that truth, which most he dreads to know.

ZANGA.

Be gone. Now, now, my soul, consummate all.

[*Exit* Isabella.

Enter ALONZO.

ALONZO.

O Zanga!

ZANGA.

Do not tremble so; but speak.

ALONZO.

I dare not [*Falls on him.*

ZANGA.

You will drown me with your tears.

ALONZO.

Have I not cause?

ZANGA.

As yet, you have no cause.

ALONZO.

Dost thou too rave?

ZANGA.

Your anguish is to come:
You much have been abus'd.

ALONZO.

Abus'd! by whom?

ZANGA.

To know, were little comfort.

ALONZO.

O! 'twere much.

ZANGA.

Indeed!

ALONZO.

By Heaven. O give him to my fury!

ZANGA.

Born for your use, I live but to oblige you:
Know then, 'twas——I

ALONZO.

Am I awake?

ZANGA.

For ever.
Thy wife is guiltless; that 's one transport to me:
And I, I let thee know it; that 's another:
I urg'd Don Carlos to resign his mistress;
I forg'd the letter; I dispos'd the picture;
I hated; I despis'd; and I destroy.

ALONZO.

Oh! [*Swoons.*

ZANGA.

Why, this is well—why, this is blow for blow.
Where are you? Crown me, shadow me, with laurels,
Ye spirits which delight in just revenge:
Let Europe, and her pallid sons, go weep;
Let Africk, and her hundred thrones, rejoice.
O my dear countrymen! look down, and see
How I bestride your prostrate conqueror!
I tread on haughty Spain, and all her kings:
But this is mercy; this is my indulgence;
'Tis peace; 'tis refuge, from my indignation:
I must awake him into horrors. Ho!
Alonzo, ho! the Moor is at the gate;
Awake, Invincible, Omnipotent!
Thou who dost all subdue.

ALONZO.

Inhuman slave!

ZANGA.

Fall'n Christian, thou mistak'st my character.
Look on me. Who am I? I know, thou say'st

The Moor, a slave, an abject, *beaten* slave
(Eternal woes to him that made me so!):
But look again. Has six years cruel bondage
Extinguish'd majesty so far, that nought
Shines here, to give an awe of one above thee?
When the great Moorish king, Abdalla, fell,
Fell by thy hand accurs'd, I fought fast by him;
His son, though, through his fondness, in disguise,
Less to expose me to th' ambitious foe.
Ha! Does it wake thee? O'er my father's corse
I stood astride, till I had clove thy crest;
And then was made the captive of a squadron,
And sunk into thy servant.—But O! What,
What were my wages? Hear not, heaven nor earth!
My wages were a *blow*;—by Heaven, a *blow*;
And from a mortal hand.

ALONZO.

O villain! villain!

ZANGA. [*shewing a dagger.*]

ALONZO.

All strife is vain.
Is thus my love return'd?
Is this my recompence? Make friends of tigers!
Lay not your young, O mothers, on the breast,
For fear they turn to serpents as they lie,
And pay you for their nourishment with death.
Carlos is dead, and Leonora dying;
Both innocent, both murder'd, both by me:
That heavenly maid, which should have liv'd for ever,
At least have gently slept her soul away;

Whose life should have shut up as evening flowers
At the departing sun——was murder'd! murder'd!
O shame! O guilt! O horror! O remorse!
O punishment! Had Satan never fell,
Hell had been made for me—O Leonora!

ZANGA.

Must I despise thee too, as well as hate thee?
Complain of grief, complain thou art a man.
Priam from fortune's lofty summit fell;
Great Alexander 'midst his conquests mourn'd;
Heroes and demi-gods have known their sorrows;
Cæsars have wept; and I have had—my *blow*:
But 'tis reveng'd; and now my work is done.
Yet, ere I fall, be it one part of vengeance,
To make e'en thee confess that I am just:
Thou seest a prince, whose father thou hast slain;
Whose native country thou hast laid in blood;
Whose sacred person, oh! thou hast profan'd;
Whose reign extinguish'd: What was left to me
So highly born? No kingdom, but Revenge;
No treasure, but thy tortures, and thy groans.
If men should ask who brought thee to thy end,
Tell them the Moor, and they will not despise thee:
If cold white mortals censure this great deed,
Warn them, they judge not of superior beings,
Souls made of fire, and children of the sun,
With whom revenge is virtue. Fare thee well——
Now, fully satisfied, I should take leave;
But one thing grieves me; since thy death is near,
I leave thee my example how to die.

As he is going to stab himself, Alonzo *rushes upon him to prevent him. In the mean time, Enter* Alvarez, *attended. They disarm and seize* Zanga. Alonzo *puts the dagger in his bosom.*

ALONZO.

No, monster, thou shalt not escape by death.—
O father!

ALVAREZ.

O Alonzo!———Isabella,
Touch'd with remorse to see her mistress' pangs,
Told all the dreadful tale.

ALONZO.

What groan was that?

ZANGA.

As I have been a vulture to thy heart,
So will I be a raven to thine ear,
And true as ever snuff'd the scent of blood,
As ever flapp'd its heavy wing against
The window of the sick, and croak'd despair:
Thy wife is dead.

[Alvarez *goes to the side of the stage, and returns.*

ALVAREZ.

The dreadful news is true.

ALONZO.

Prepare the rack; invent new torments for him

ZANGA.

This too is well. The fix'd and noble mind
Turns all occurrence to its own advantage,
And I'll make vengeance of calamity.
Were I not thus reduc'd, thou wouldst not know,

That, thus reduc'd, I dare defy thee still:
Torture thou mayst; but thou shalt ne'er despise me:
The blood will follow, where the knife is driven;
The flesh will quiver, where the pincers tear;
And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain:
But these are foreign to the soul: Not mine
The groans that issue, or the tears that fall;
They disobey me; on the rack I scorn thee,
As when my falchion clove thy helm in battle.

ALVAREZ.

Peace, villain!

ZANGA.

While I live, old man, I'll speak;
And well I know thou dar'st not kill me yet;
For that would rob thy blood-hounds of their prey.

ALONZO.

Who call'd Alonzo?

ALVAREZ.

No one call'd, my son.

ALONZO.

Again! 'Tis Carlos' voice, and I obey.
O how I laugh at all that this can do!
[*Shewing the dagger.*
The wounds that pain'd, the wounds that murder'd me,
Were given before; I am already dead;
This only marks my body for the grave. [*Stabs himself.*
Africk, thou art reveng'd.——O Leonora!— [*Dies.*

ZANGA.

Good ruffians, give me leave; my blood is yours;

The wheel's prepar'd, and you shall have it all;
Let me but look one moment on the dead,
And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.
[*He goes to* Alonzo's *body.*
Is this Alonzo? Where's the haughty mien?
Is that the hand which smote me? Heav'ns, how pale!
And art thou dead? So is my enmity:
I war not with the dust. The great, the proud,
The conqueror of Africk, was my foe.
A lion preys not upon carcases.
This was the only method to subdue me:
Terror and doubt fall on me: all thy good
Now blazes; all thy guilt is in the grave.
Never had man such funeral applause:
If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.
O vengeance! I have follow'd thee too far;
And to receive me hell blows all her fires.
[*He is borne off.*

ALVAREZ.

Dreadful effect of jealousy! a rage
In which the wise with caution will engage;
Reluctant long, and tardy to believe,
Where, sway'd by nature, we ourselves deceive;
Where our own folly joins the villain's art,
And each man finds a Zanga in his heart. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE,

BY A FRIEND.

OUR Author sent me, in an humble strain,
To beg you 'd bless the offspring of his brain;
And I, your proxy, promis'd, in your name,
The child should live, at least six days of fame:
I like the brat; but still his faults can find;
And by the parent's leave will speak my mind.
Gallants, pray tell me, do you think 'twas well,
To let a willing maid lead apes in hell?
You, nicer ladies, should you think it right
To eat no supper——on your wedding-night?
Should English husbands dare to starve their wives,
Be sure, they 'd lead most comfortable lives.
But he loves mischief, and, with groundless fears,
Would fain set loving couples by the ears;
Would spoil the tender husbands of our nation,
By teaching them his vile outlandish fashion:
But we 've been taught, in our good-natur'd clime,
That jealousy, though just, is still a crime,
And will be still; for, (not to blame the plot,)
That same Alonzo was a stupid sot,
To kill a bride, a mistress unenjoy'd;
Twere some excuse, had the poor man been cloy'd:
To kill her on suspicion, ere he knew
Whether the heinous crime were false or true.——

The priest said grace; she met him in the bower,
In hopes she might anticipate an hour:——
Love was her errand; but the hot-brain'd Spaniard,
Instead of love—produc'd a filthy poniard:——
Had he been wise at this their private meeting,
The proof o' th' pudding had been in the eating:
Madam had then been pleas'd, and Don contented,
And all this blood and murder been prevented.
Britons, be wise, and, from this sad example,
Ne'er break a bargain, but first take a sample.

THE

BROTHERS.

A TRAGEDY.

PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN BY

MR. DODSLEY.

THE Tragic Muse, revolving many a page
Of time's long records drawn from every age,
Forms not her plans on low or trivial deeds,
But marks the striking!——When some hero bleeds
To save his country, then her powers inspire,
And souls congenial catch the patriot fire——
When bold oppression grinds a suffering land;
When the keen dagger gleams in murder's hand;
When black conspiracy infects the throng;
Or fell revenge sits brooding o'er his wrong;
Then walks she forth in terror; at her frown
Guilt shrinks appal'd though seated on a throne.
But the rack'd soul, when dark suspicions rend;
When brothers hate, and sons with sires contend;
When clashing interests war eternal wage;
And love, the tenderest passion, turns to rage;—
Then grief on every visage stands imprest,
And pity throbs in every feeling breast;
Hope, fear, and indignation, rise by turns,
And the strong scene with various passion burns.
Such is our tale:—Nor blush, if tears should flow;
They 're virtue's tribute paid to human woe:
Such drops new lustre to bright eyes impart;
The silent witness of a tender heart.

Such drops adorn the noblest hero's cheek,
And paint his worth, in strokes that more than speak:
Not he who cannot weep, but he who can,
Shews the great soul, and proves himself a man.
Yet do not idly grieve at others' pain,
Nor let the tears of nature fall in vain:
Watch the close crimes from whence their ills are grown,
And from their frailties learn to mend your own.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

PHILIP, King of Macedon.

PERSEUS, his elder Son.

DEMETRIUS, his younger Son.

PERICLES, the Friend of PERSEUS.

ANTIGONUS, a Minister of State.

DYMAS, the King's Favourite.

POSTHUMIUS, CURTIUS, } Roman Ambassadors.

WOMEN.

ERIXINE, the Thracian Princess.

Her Attendant.

THE

BROTHERS.

ACT I.

Enter CURTIUS *and* POSTHUMIUS.

CURTIUS.

THERE's something of magnificence about us
I have not seen at Rome. But you can tell me.
[*Gazes round.*

POSTHUMIUS.

True: Hither sent on former embassies,
I know this splendid court of Macedon,
And haughty Philip, well.

CURTIUS.

His pride presumes
To treat us here like subjects, more than Romans,
More than ambassadors, who, in our bosoms,
Bear peace and war, and throw him which we please,
As Jove his storm, or sunshine, on his creatures.

POSTHUMIUS.

This Philip only, since Rome's glory rose,
Preserves its grandeur to the name of king;
Like a bold star, that shews its fires by day.
The Greek, who won the world, was sent before him,
As the gray dawn before the blaze of noon:
Philip had ne'er been conquer'd, but by Rome;
And what can fame say more of mortal man?

CURTIUS.

I know his public character.

POSTHUMIUS.

It pains me
To turn my thoughts on his domestic state:
There Philip is no God; but pours his heart,
In ceaseless groans, o'er his contending sons;
And pays the secret tax of mighty men
To their mortality.

CURTIUS.

But whence the strife,
Which thus afflicts him?

POSTHUMIUS.

From this Philip's bed
Two Alexanders spring.

CURTIUS.

And but one world?
'Twill never do.

POSTHUMIUS.

They both are bright; but one
Benignly bright, as stars to mariners;
And one a comet with malignant blaze,
Denouncing ruin.

CURTIUS.

You mean Perseus.

POSTHUMIUS.

True.
The younger son Demetrius, you well know,
Was bred at Rome, our hostage from his father.
Soon after, he was sent ambassador,
When Philip fear'd the thunder of our arms.

Rome's manners won him, and his manners Rome;
Who granted peace, declaring she forgave,
To his high worth, the conduct of his father.
This gave him all the hearts of Macedon;
Which, join'd to his high patronage from Rome,
Inflames his jealous brother.

CURTIUS.

Glows there not
A second brand of enmity?

POSTHUMIUS.

O, yes;
The fair Erixene.

CURTIUS.

I've partly heard
Her smother'd story.

POSTHUMIUS.

Smother'd by the king;
And wisely too. But thou shalt hear it all.
Not seals of adamant, not mountains whelm'd
On guilty secrets, can exclude the day.
Long burnt a fix'd hereditary hate
Between the crowns of Macedon and Thrace;
The sword by both too much indulg'd in blood.
Philip, at length, prevail'd; he took, by night,
The town and palace of his deadly foe;
Rush'd thro' the flames, which he had kindled round,
And slew him, bold in vain: Nor rested there;
But, with unkingly cruelty, destroy'd
Two little sons within their mother's arms;
Thus meaning to tread out those sparks of war,

Which might one day flame up to great revenge.
The queen, through grief, on her dead sons expir'd.
One child alone surviv'd: a female infant,
Amid these horrors, in the cradle smil'd.

CURTIUS.

What of that infant?

POSTHUMIUS.

Stung with sharp remorse,
The victor took, and gave her to his queen.
The child was bred, and honour'd, as her own;
She grew, she bloom'd; and now her eyes repay
Her brothers' wounds on Philip's rival sons.

CURTIUS.

Is then Erixene that Thracian child?
How just the Gods! From out that ruin'd house
He took a brand, to set his own on fire.

POSTHUMIUS.

To give thee, friend, the whole in miniature;
This is the picture of great Philip's court:
The proud, but melancholy king, on high,
Majestic sits, like Jove inthron'd in darkness;
His sons are as the thunder in his hand;
And the fair Thracian princess is a star,
That sparkles by, and gilds the solemn scene.

[*Shouts heard.*

'Tis their great day, supreme of all the year,
The fam'd lustration of their martial powers;
Thence for our audience chosen by the king.
If he provokes a war, his empire shakes,
And all her lofty glories nod to ruin.

CURTIUS.

Who comes?

POSTHUMIUS.

O, that 's the jealous elder brother;
Irregular in manners, as in form.
Observe the fire, high birth, and empire, kindle!

CURTIUS.

He holds his conference with much emotion.

POSTHUMIUS.

The brothers both can talk; and, in their turns,
Have borne away the prize of eloquence
At Athens. Shun his walk: Our own debate
Is now at hand: We 'll seek his lion sire,
Who dares to frown on us his conquerors;
And carries so much monarch on his brow,
As if he 'd fright us with the wounds we gave him.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter PERSEUS *and* PERICLES.

PERSEUS.

'Tis empire! empire! empire! let that word
Make sacred all I do, or can attempt!
Had I been born a slave, I should affect it:
My nature's fiery, and, of course, aspires.
Who gives an empire, by the gift defeats
All end of giving; and procures contempt
Instead of gratitude. An empire lost,
Destroy'd, would less confound me, than resign'd.

PERICLES.

But are you sure Demetrius will attempt?

PERSEUS.

Why does Rome court him? For his virtues? No:
To fire him to dominion: to blow up

A civil war; then to support him in it:
He gains the name of king, and Rome the power.

PERICLES.

This is indeed the common art of Rome.

PERSEUS.

That source of justice through the wond'ring world!
His youth and valour second Rome's designs:
The first impels him to presumptuous hope;
The last supports him in it. Then his person!
Thy hand, O nature, has made bold with mine.
Yet more: What words distil from his red lip,
To gull the multitude! and they make kings.
Ten thousand fools, knaves, cowards, lump'd together,
Become all-wise, all-righteous, and all-mighty.
Nor is this all: The foolish Thracian maid
Prefers the boy to me.

PERICLES.

And does that pain you?

PERSEUS.

O Pericles, to death. It is most true,
Through hate to him, and not through love for her,
I paid my first addresses; but became
The fool I feign'd: My sighs are now sincere;
It smarts; it burns: O that 'twere fiction still!
By heaven, she seems more beauteous than dominion.

PERICLES.

Dominion and the princess both are lost,
Unless you gain the king.

PERSEUS.

But how to gain him?
Old men love novelties: the last arriv'd

Still pleases best; the youngest steals their smiles.

PERICLES.

Dymas alone can work him to his pleasure;
First in esteem, and keeper of his heart.

PERSEUS.

To Dymas thou; and win him to thy will:
In the mean time I 'll seek my double rival;
Curb his presumption, and erect myself,
In all the dignity of birth, before him.
Whate'er can stir the blood, or sway the mind,
Is now at stake; and double is the loss,
When an inferior bears away the prize.

PERICLES.

Your brother, dress'd for the solemnity.

PERSEUS.

To Dymas fly! gain him, and think on this:
A prince indebted, is a fortune made.

[*Exit* Pericles.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

How, brother, unattir'd! Have you forgot
What pomps are due to this illustrious day?

PERSEUS.

I am no gewgaw, for the throng to gaze at:
Some are design'd by nature but for show;
The tinsel and the feather of mankind.

DEMETRIUS.

Brother, of that no more: For shame, gird on
Your glitt'ring arms, and look like any Roman.

PERSEUS.

No, brother; let the Romans look like me,

If they 're ambitious.—But, I pr'ythee, stand;
Let me gaze on thee :—No inglorious figure!
More Romano, as it ought to be.
But what is this that dazzles my weak sight?
There 's sunshine in thy beaver.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis that helmet
Which Alexander wore at Granicus.

PERSEUS.

When he subdu'd the world? Ha! is't not so?
What world hast thou subdu'd? O yes; the fair.
Think'st thou there could in Macedon be found
No brow might suit that golden blaze, but thine?

DEMETRIUS.

I wore it but to grace this sacred day;
Jar not for trifles.

PERSEUS.

Nothing is a trifle
That argues the presumption of the soul.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis they presume, who know not to deserve.

PERSEUS.

Or who, deserving, scorn superior merit.

DEMETRIUS.

Who combats with a brother, wounds himself.
Wave private wrath, and rush upon the foes
Of Macedonia.

PERSEUS.

No; I would not wound
Demetrius' friends.

DEMETRIUS.

Demetrius' friends!

PERSEUS.

The Romans.
You copy Hannibal, our great ally?
Say, at what altar were you sworn their foe?
Peace-making brother! Wherefore bring you peace,
But to prevent my glory from the field?
The peace you bring, was meant as war to me.

DEMETRIUS.

Perseus, be bold when danger's all your own:
War now, were war with Philip more than Rome.

PERSEUS.

Come, you love peace; that fair cheek hates a scar:
You that admire the Romans, break the bridge
With Cocles, or with Curtius leap the gulf;
And league not with the vices of our foes.

DEMETRIUS.

What vices?

PERSEUS.

With their women, and their wits:
Your idol Lælius; Lælius the polite.
I hear, sir, you take wing, and mount in metre:
Terence has own'd your aid, your comrade Terence.
God-like ambition! Terence there, the slave!

DEMETRIUS.

At Athens bred, and to the arts a foe?

PERSEUS.

At Athens bred, and borrow arts from Rome?

DEMETRIUS.

Brother, I 've done: Let our contention cease:
Our mother shudders at it in her grave:
And how has Philip mourn'd? a dreadful foe,

And awful king; but, O, the tend'rest parent
That ever wept in fondness o'er a child!

PERSEUS.

Why, ay; go tell your father; fondly throw
Your arms around him; stroke him to your purpose,
As you are wont: I boast not so much worth;
I am no picture, by the doating eye
To be survey'd, and hung about his neck.
I fight his battles; that's all I can do.
But if you boast a piety sincere,
One way you may secure you father's peace:
And one alone—Resign Erixene.

DEMETRIUS.

You flatter me, to think her in my power.
We run our fates together; you deserve,
And she can judge; proceed we then like friends,
And he who gains her heart, and gains it fairly,
Let him enjoy his generous rival's too.

PERSEUS.

Smooth-speaking, insincere, insulting boy!
Is then my crown usurpt but half thy crime?
Desist, or, by the gods that smile on blood,
Not thy fine form, nor yet thy boasted peace,
Nor patronizing Rome, nor Philip's tears,
Nor Alexander's helmet; no, nor more,
His radiant form, should it alight in thunder,
And spread its new divinity between us,
Should save a brother from a brother's fury. [*Exit* Per.

DEMETRIUS.

How's this? The waves ne'er ran thus high before.
Resign thee! yes, Erixene, with life!

Thou in whose eye, so modest, and so bright,
Love ever wakes, and keeps a vestal fire,
Ne'er shall I wean my fond, fond heart from thee.
But Perseus warns me to rouse all my powers.
As yet I float in dark uncertainty;
For, though she smiles, I sound not her designs
I 'll fly, fall, tremble, weep upon her feet,
And learn (O all ye gods!) my final doom!
My father! Ha! and on his brow deep thought,
And pale concern! Kind heaven, asswage his sorrows,
Which strike a damp thro' all my flames of love. [*Exit.*

Enter KING *and* ANTIGONUS.

KING.

Kings of their envy cheat a foolish world:
Fate gives us all in spite, that we alone
Might have the pain of knowing all is nothing;
The seeming means of bliss but heighten woe,
When impotent to make their promise good:
Hence kings, at least, bid fairest to be wretched.

ANTIGONUS.

True, sir; 'tis empty, or tormenting, all:
The days of life are sisters; all alike;
None just the same; which serve to fool us on
Through blasted hopes, with change of fallacy;
While joy is, like to-morrow, still to come:
Nor ends the fruitless chase but in the grave.

KING.

Ay, there, Antigonus, this pain will cease,
Which meets me at the banquet; haunts my pillow
Nor, by the din of arms, is frighted from me.
Conscience, what art thou? thou tremendous power

Who dost inhabit us without our leave;
And art, within ourselves, another self;
A master self; that loves to domineer,
And treat the monarch frankly as the slave.
How dost thou light a torch to distant deeds?
Make the past, present, and the future, frown?
How, ever and anon, awake the soul,
As with a peal of thunder, to strange horrors,
In this long restless dream, which idiots hug,
Nay, wise men flatter with the name of life?

ANTIGONUS.

You think too much.

KING.

I do not think at all:
The gods impose, the gods inflict, my thoughts;
And paint my dreams with images of dread.
Last night, in sleep, I saw the Thracian queen,
And her two murder'd sons. She frown'd upon me,
And pointed at their wounds. How throbb'd my heart?
How shook my couch? And, when the morning came,
The formidable picture still subsisted,
And slowly vanish'd from my waking eye.
I fear some heavy vengeance hangs in air,
And conscious deities infuse these thoughts,
To warn my soul of her approaching doom.
The gods are rigid when they weigh such deeds
As speak a ruthless heart; they measure blood
By drops, and bate not one in the repay.
Could infants hurt me? 'Twas not like a king.

ANTIGONUS.

My lord, I do confess the gods are with us;

Stand at our side in every act of life;
And on our pillow watch each secret thought;
Nay, see it in its embryo, yet unborn.
But their wrath ceases on remorse for guilt;
And well I know your sorrows touch your sons;
Nor is it possible but time must quench
Their flaming spirits in a father's tears.

KING.

Vain comfort! I this moment overheard
My jarring sons with fury shake my walls.
Ah! why my curse from those that ought to bless me?
The queen of Thrace can answer that sad question:
She had two sons; but two: And so have I.
Misfortune stands with her bow ever bent
Over the world; and he who wounds another,
Directs the goddess by that part he wounds,
Where to strike deep her arrows in himself.

ANTIGONUS.

I own, I think it time your sons receive
A father's awful counsel; or, while here,
Now weary nature calls for kind repose,
Your curtains will be shaken with their broils;
And, when you die, sons' blood may stain your tomb.—
But other cares demand you now: The Romans.

KING.

O change of pain! The Romans? Perish Rome!
Thrice happy they who sleep in humble life,
Beneath the storm ambition blows. 'Tis meet
The great should have the fame of happiness,
The consolation of a little envy;

'Tis all their pay for those superior cares,
Those pangs of heart, their vassals ne'er can feel.
Where are these strangers? First I 'll hear their tale;
Then talk in private with my sons.

ANTIGONUS.

But how
Intends my lord to make his peace with Rome?

KING.

Rome calls me fiery: Let her find me so!

ANTIGONUS.

O sir, forbear! Too late you felt Rome's power.

KING.

Yes, and that reason stings me more than ever,
To curse, and hate, and hazard all against her.

ANTIGONUS.

Hate her too much to give her battle now;
Nor to your godlike valour owe your ruin.
Greece, Thessaly, Illyrium, Rome has seiz'd;
Your treasures wasted, and your phalanx thinn'd;
Should she proceed, and strike at Macedon,
What would be left of empire?

KING.

Philip: All.
I 'll take my throne. Send in these foreigners.

Scene draws, and discovers a magnificent throne, Perseus, Demetrius, *Courtiers, &c. attending.* Posthumius *and* Curtius, *the Roman ambassadors, enter. Trumpets sound. The King ascends the throne.*

POSTHUMIUS.

Philip of Macedon; To these complaints

Our friends groan out, and you have heard at large,
Rome now expects an answer. She sits judge,
And will have right on earth.

KING.

Expects an answer!
I so shall answer, as becomes a king.

POSTHUMIUS.

Or more, sir; as becomes a friend of Rome.

KING.

Or Alexander's heir; to rise still higher.
But to the purpose. Thus a king to those
That would make kings, and puff them out at pleasure
Has Philip done amiss? 'Twas you provok'd him.
My cities, which deserted in my wars,
I thought it meet to punish: You denied me.
When I had shook the walls of Marena,
You pluck'd me thence, and took the taken town:
Then you sent word I should retire from Greece,
A conquest at my door, by nature mine;
And said, "Here end thy realm;" as ye were gods!
And gods ye shall be, ere Rome humble me.
All this is done; yet Philip is your friend!
If this buys friendship, where can you find foes?
In what regard will stern Rome look upon me?
If as a friend, too precious let her hold
Her own esteem, to cast a stain on mine;
If as an enemy, let her proceed,
And do as she has done; she need no more.

POSTHUMIUS.

The Romans do no wrong; yet still are men:

And if to-day an error thwarts their purpose,
To-morrow sets it right: If Philip loves
Dominion, and the pride that waits on kings,
(Of which, perhaps, his words too strongly savour)
Humility to Rome will lead him to it:
She can give more than common kings can govern.

KING.

Than common kings? Ambassador! remember
Cannæ—where first my sword was flusht with blood.

DEMETRIUS. [*aside to the king.*]

My lord, forbear.

KING.

And Hannibal still lives.

POSTHUMIUS.

Because he fled at Capua.

KING.

There, indeed,
I was not with him.

POSTHUMIUS.

Therefore he fled alone.——
Since thus you treat us,—hear another charge.
Why here detain you, prisoner of your power,
His daughter, who was once Rome's good ally,
The king of Thrace? Why is she not restor'd?
For our next meeting you 'll provide an answer.
What now has pass'd, for his sake we forgive.
[*Pointing to* Demetrius.
But mark this well: There lies some little distance,
Philip, between a Roman and a king. [*Exeunt* Romans.

KING.

How say'st, unscepter'd boaster! This to me!

With Hannibal I cleft yon Alpine rocks;
With Hannibal choak'd Thrasymene with slaughter:
But, O the night of Cannæ's raging field!
When half the Roman senate lay in blood
Without our tent, and groan'd, as we carous'd!
Immortal gods! for such another hour!
Then throw my carcase to the dogs of Rome.

ANTIGONUS.

Sir, you forget your sons.

KING.

Let all withdraw.

[*Exeunt all but the King and his sons.*

Two passions only take up all my soul;
Hatred to Rome, and tenderness for them.——
Draw near, my sons, and listen to my age.
By what has pass'd, you see the state of things:
Foreign alliance must a king secure;
And insolence sustain to serve his power:
And if alliances with Rome are needful,
Much more among ourselves. If I must bear,
Unmov'd, an insult from a stranger's brow,
Shall not a brother bear a brother's look
Without impatience? Whither all this tends,
I'm sorry that your conscious hearts can tell you:
Is it not most severe? Two sons alone
Have crown'd my bed; and they two are not brothers.
Look here; and, from my kind regards to you,
Copy such looks as you should bear each other.
Why do I sigh? Do you not know, my sons?
And if you do—O let me sigh no more!

Let these white hairs put in a claim to peace!

PERSEUS.

Henceforth, my sole contention with my brother
Is this; which best obeys our father's will.

DEMETRIUS.

Father, if simple nature ever speaks
In her own language, scorning useless words,
You see her now; she swells into my eyes.
I take thee to my heart; I fold thee in it.

[*Embracing* Perseus.

Our father bids; and that we drank one milk,
Is now the smallest motive of my love.

KING.

Antigonus, the joy their mother felt
When they were born, was faint to what I feel.

DEMETRIUS.

See, brother, if he does not weep! His love
Runs o'er in venerable tears. I 'm rude;
But nature will prevail—My king! My father!

[*Embracing.*

PERSEUS. [*aside.*]

Now cannot I let fall a single tear.

KING.

See! the good man has caught it too.

ANTIGONUS.

Such tears,
And such alone, be shed in Macedonia!

KING.

Be not thou, Perseus, jealous of thy brother;
Nor thou, Demetrius, prone to give him cause;

Nor either think of empire till I 'm dead.
You need not; you reign now; my heart is yours.
Sheath your resentments in your father's peace;
Come to my bosom both, and swear it there.

[*Embracing his sons.*

ANTIGONUS.

Look down, ye gods, and change me, if you can,
This sight for one more lovely. What so sweet,
So beautiful, on earth, and, ah! so rare,
As kindred love, and family repose!
This, this alliance, Rome, will quite undo thee.
See this, proud Eastern monarchs! and look pale!
Armies are routed, realms o'er-run by this.

KING.

Or if leagu'd worlds superior forces bring,
I 'd rather die a father, than a king.
Fathers alone, a father's heart can know;
What secret tides of still enjoyment flow,
When brothers love! But if their hate succeeds,
They wage the war; but 'tis the father bleeds.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

Enter PERSEUS.

PERSEUS.

WHY loiters my ambassador to Dymas?
His greatness will not sure presume to scorn
A friendship offer'd from an heir of empire.—
But Pericles returns. [*Enter* Pericles.
Is Dymas ours?

PERICLES.

He 's cautious, sir; he 's subtle; he 's a courtier;
Dymas is now for you, now for your brother;
For both, and neither: He 's a summer insect,
And loves the sunshine: On his gilded wings,
While the scales waver, he 'll fly doubtful round you,
And sing his flatteries to both alike:
The scales once fix'd, he 'll settle on the winner,
And swear his prayers drew down the victory—
But what success had you, sir, with your brother?

PERSEUS.

All, all my hopes are at the point of death!
The boy triumphant keeps his hold in love:
He 's ever warbling nonsense in her ear,
With all th' intoxication of success.
Darkness encloses me; nor see I light
From any quarter dawn, but from his death.

PERICLES.

Why start at his death, who resolves on yours?

PERSEUS.

Resolves on mine!

PERICLES.

Have you not mark'd the princess?
You have: With what a beam of majesty
Her eye strikes sacred awe! It speaks her mind
Exalted, as it is. Whom loves she then?
Demetrius? No; Rome's darling; who, no doubt,
Dares court her with your empire. And shall Perseus
Survive that loss?—Thus he resolves your death.

PERSEUS.

Most true. What crime then to strike first? But how?
Or when? or where? O Pericles! assist me.

PERICLES.

'Tis dangerous.

PERSEUS.

The fitter then for me.

PERICLES.

Wait an occasion that befriends your wishes.

PERSEUS.

Go, fool, and teach a cataract to creep!
Can thirst of empire, vengeance, beauty, wait?

PERICLES.

In the mean time, accept a stratagem
That must secure your empire, or your love.
Your brother's Roman friendships gall no less
The king, than you: He dreads their consequence.
Dymas hates Rome; and Dymas has a daughter.
How can the king so powerfully fix

Demetrius' faith, as by his marriage there?
For Dymas thus (Rome's sworn, eternal foe)
Becomes a spy upon his private life,
And surety for his conduct.

PERSEUS.

True—But thus
Our art defeats itself. My brother gains
The favourite, and so strengthens in his treason.

PERICLES.

Think you, he 'll wed her? No; the princess' eye
Makes no such short-liv'd conquest. He 'll refuse
And thus effect what I have strove in vain:
Yes, he 'll refuse; and Dymas, in his wrath,
Will list for us, and vengeance——Then the king
Will, doubtless, much resent his son's refusal;
And thus we kindle the whole court against him.

PERSEUS.

My precious friend, I thank thee. I take wing
On ardent hope: I think it cannot fail.
Go, make thy court to Dymas with this scheme:
Be gone.—Erixene!—I 'll feed her pride [*Looking out.*
Once more; but not expend my breath in vain.
This meeting stamps unalterable fate;
I will wed her, or vengeance.

[*Enter* Erixene *and* Delia.

O Erixene!
O princess! colder than your Thracian snows!
See Perseus, who ne'er stoop'd but to the gods,
Prostrate before you. Fame and empire sue.
Why have I conquer'd?—Because you are fair.

What 's empire?—but a title to adore you.
Why do I number in my lineage high
Heroes and gods?—That you, scarce less divine,
Without a blush may listen to my vows.
My ancestor subdu'd the world. I dare
Beyond his pride, and grasp at more, in you.
Obdurate maid! or turn, or I expire.

ERIXENE.

If love, my lord, is choice, who loves in vain
Should blame himself alone; and if 'tis fate,
'Tis fate in all: Why then your blame on me?
My crown 's precarious, through the chance of war;
But sure my heart 's my own. Each villager
Is queen of her affections, and can vent
Her arbitrary sighs where'er she pleases.
Shall then the daughter of a race of kings——

PERSEUS.

Madam, you justly blame the chance of war:
The gods have been unkind: I am not so.
No! Perseus comes to counterbalance fate;
Thrace ne'er was conquer'd—if you smile on me.
Silent! obdurate still! as cold as death!
But 'tis Demetrius——

ERIXENE.

Prince, I take your meaning.
But, if you truly think his worth prevails,
How strange is your request!

PERSEUS.

No, madam, no;
Though love has hurt my mind, I still can judge

What springs the passions of the great controul.
Ambition is first minister of state;
Love 's but a second in the cabinet;
Nor can he feather there his unfledg'd shaft
But from ambition's wing: But you conceive
More sanguine hopes, from him whom Rome supports,
Than me. You view Demetrius on my throne;
And thence he shines indeed. His charms from thence
Transpierce your soul, enamour'd of dominion.

ERIXENE.

Why now you shew me your profound esteem!
Demetrius' guilt alone has charms for me;
'Tis not the prince, but traitor, wins my love.——
Such insults are not brook'd by royal minds,
Howe'er their fortunes ebb: and though I mourn,
An orphan, and a captive, gods there are——
Fear then an orphan's and a captive's wrong.

PERSEUS.

Your cruel treatment of my passion——
But I 'll not talk.—This, madam; only this——
Think not the cause, the cursed cause of all,
Shall laugh secure, and triumph in my pangs:
No; by the torments of a heart on fire,
He gluts my vengeance, who defrauds my love! [*Exit.*

ERIXENE.

What have I done? In what a whirlwind rage
Has snatch'd him hence on ill! I frown on Perseus,
And kill Demetrius.

DELIA.

Madam, see! the prince.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

ERIXENE.

Ah, prince! the tempest, which so long has lowr'd,
Is now full ripe, and bursting o'er your head.
This moment Perseus' malice flam'd before me;
Victorious rage broke through his wonted guard,
And menac'd loud your ruin. Fly! O fly
This instant.

DEMETRIUS.

To what refuge?

ERIXENE.

Rome extends
Her longing arms to clasp you for her own.

DEMETRIUS.

Madam, 'tis prudent; I confess it is:
But is it loving as true lovers ought,
To be so very prudent in our love?
I boast not so much wisdom; I prefer
Death at your feet, before the world without you.

ERIXENE.

In danger thus extreme——

DEMETRIUS.

Oh! most belov'd!
Lov'd you like me, like me would you discern,
That I but execute my brother's purpose
By such a flight. At that his clamour, rage,
And menace aim, to chase a rival hence,
And keep the field alone. Oh! shall I leave him
To gaze whole days; to learn to read your eye;

To study your delights; to chide the wind's
Too rude approach; to bid the ground be smooth;
To follow, like your shadow, where you go;
Tread in your steps; perhaps—to touch your hand?
O death! to minister in little things;
From half a glance to prophesy your will,
And do it, ere well form'd in your own mind?
Gods! gods! while worlds divide me from my princess,
That, should she call, Demetrius might grow old,
Ere he could reach her feet.

ERIXENE.

If Perseus' love
Pains you, it pains me more. Is your heart griev'd?
Mine is tormented: But since Philip's self
Is love's great advocate, a flat refusal
But blows their rage, and hastens your destruction.
Had I not that to fear, were you secure,
I'd ease my bosom of its full disdain,
And dash this bold presumer on his birth—
But, see! the grand procession.

DEMETRIUS.

We must join it.

Enter the KING, PERSEUS, *Romans,* ANTIGONUS, *&c.*

KING.

Let the procession halt! and here be paid,
Before yon flaming altar, thanks to heaven,
That brings us safe to this auspicious day,
The great lustration of our martial powers,
Which, from its distant birth to present time,

Unfolds the glories of this ancient empire,
And throngs the pride of ages in an hour.

POSTHUMIUS. [*pointing.*]

What figure 's that, O Philip! which precedes?

KING.

The founder of our empire, furious son
Of great Alcides. We 're allied to heaven;
And you, I think, call Romulus a god.—
That, Philip, second of our name; and here,
O bend with awe to him, whose red right hand
Hurl'd proud Darius like a star from heaven,
With lesser lights around him, flaming down,
And bid the laurel'd sons of Macedonia
Drink their own Ganges.

PERSEUS. [*aside to DEMETRIUS.*]

Give him his helmet, brother.

KING. [*to his sons.*]

You lead the troops that join in mock encounter;
And in no other may you ever meet!
But march one way, and drive the world before you.
The victor, as our ancient rites decree,
Must hold a feast, and triumph in the bowl.

DEMETRIUS.

I long, my lord, to see the charge begin;
The brandish'd falchion, and the clashing helm,
Though but in sport; it is a sport for men.
Raw Alexander thus began his fame,
And overthrew Darius, first, at home.
We'll practise o'er the plans of future conquests,

While neighbouring nations tremble at our play;
And own the fault in fortune, not in us,
That we but want a foe to be immortal.

PERSEUS.

You have supplied my wants: I thank you, brother.

KING. [*rising, and coming forwards. Music.*]
How vain all outward effort to supply
The soul with joy! The noon-tide sun is dark,
And music discord, when the heart is low:
Avert its omen! What a damp hangs on me!
These sprightly tuneful airs but skim along
The surface of my soul, not enter there:
She does not dance to this enchanting sound.
How, like a broken instrument, beneath
The skilful touch, my joyless heart lies dead!
Nor answers to the master's hand divine!

ANTIGONUS.

When men once reach their autumn, sickly joys
Fall off apace, as yellow leaves from trees,
At every little breath misfortune blows;
Till, left quite naked of their happiness,
In the chill blasts of winter they expire.
This is the common lot. Have comfort then:
Your grief will damp the triumph.

KING.

It is over.
Hear too: the trumpet calls us to the field;
And now this phantom of a fight begins.
Fair princess, you and I will go together,

As Priam and bright Helen did of old,
To view the war. Your eyes will make them bolder,
And raise the price of victory itself.

[*All go out but* Perseus, *who has observed* Demetrius *and* Erixene *all this time conversing, and stays behind thoughtful and disturbed.*

PERSEUS.

Before my face she feeds him with her smiles:
The king looks on, nor disapproves the crime;
And the boy takes them as not due to me,
Without remorse, as happy as she 'll make him.
Perish all three! I 'll seek allies elsewhere;
Father and brother, nay, a mistress too.
Destruction, rise! Though thou art black as night
Thy mother, and as hideous as despair;
I 'll clasp thee thus, nor think of woman more.
How the boy doats, and drinks in at his eyes
Her poison! O to stab him in her arms!
And yet do less than they have done to me.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

Where is my prince? The nation's on the wing;
No bosom but exults; no hand but bears
A garland or a trophy: And shall Perseus——

PERSEUS.

Vengeance! [*Shouts within.*

PERICLES.

Hear how with shouts they rend the skies!

PERSEUS.

Give me my vengeance!

PERICLES.

Forty thousand men,
In polish'd armour, shine against the sun.

PERSEUS.

Dare but another word, and not of vengeance,
And I will use thee, as I would—my brother.

PERICLES.

Vengeance! on whom?

PERSEUS.

On him.

PERICLES.

What vengeance?

PERSEUS.

Blood.

PERICLES.

'Tis yours.

PERSEUS.

What god will give it me?

PERICLES.

Your own right hand.

PERSEUS.

I dare not—for my father.

PERICLES.

You shall dare.

PERSEUS.

Shalt thou dare give encouragement to Perseus?
Unfold thy purpose; I'll outshoot the mark.

PERICLES.

Where are you going?

PERSEUS.

To the mock encounter.

PERICLES.

What more like mock encounter than the true?

PERSEUS.

Enough—He's dead? 'Twas accident; 'twas error:
No matter what. Ten thousand share the blame.

PERICLES.

Hold, sir! I had forgot: On this occasion,
The troops are search'd; and foils alone are worn,
Instead of swords.

PERSEUS.

An osier were enough.
Who pains my heart, plants thunder in my hand.

PERICLES.

But should this fail——

PERSEUS.

Impossible!

PERICLES.

But, should it,
The banquet follows.

PERSEUS.

Poison in his wine.
I thank the gods! my spirits are reviv'd!
I draw immortal vigour from that bowl!

PERICLES.

Nay, should both fail, the field and banquet too,
All fails not; fairer hopes to fair succeed:
For know, my lord, the king receiv'd with joy
The marriage-scheme, and sent for Dymas' daughter.

PERSEUS.

Then there 's a second bowl of poison for him.

PERICLES.

Yet more: This evening those ambassadors,
Which Philip sent to Rome, beneath the name
Of public business, but, in truth, to learn
Your brother's conduct, are expected home.

PERSEUS.

Those whom I swore, before they parted hence,
In dreadful sacraments of wine and blood,
To bring back such reports as should destroy him:—
And what if, to complete our secret plan,
We feign a letter to his friend the consul,
To strengthen our ambassadors' report?

PERICLES.

That care, my lord, be mine: I know a knave,
Grown fat on forgery; he 'll counterfeit
Old Quintius' hand and seal, by former letters
Sent to the king; which you can gain with ease.

PERSEUS.

Observe—This morning, at their interview,
The Romans, in effect, inform'd the king,
That Thrace was theirs, and order'd him restore
The princess. This will give much air of truth,
If our forg'd letters say the Romans crown
Demetrius king of Thrace, and promise more.

PERICLES.

My lord, it shall be done.

PERSEUS.

All cannot fail. [*Trumpets.*

PERICLES.

The trumpets sound; the troops are mounted.

PERSEUS.

Vengeance!
Sweet vengeance calls: Nor ever call'd a god
Such swift obedience: Like the rapid wheel,
I kindle in the course; I'm there already;
Snatch the bright weapon; bound into my seat;
Strike; triumph; see him gasping on the ground,
And life, love, empire, springing from his wound.
When godlike ends, by means unjust, succeed,
The great result adorns the daring deed.
Virtue's a shackle under fair disguise,
To fetter fools, while we bear off the prize.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter PERSEUS.

PERSEUS.

Cowards in ill, like cowards in the field,
Are sure to be defeated. To strike home,
In both, is prudence: Guilt, begun, must fly
To guilt consummate, to be safe.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

My lord——

PERSEUS.

Disturb not my devotions; they decline
The beaten track, the common path of prayer——
Ye powers of darkness! that rejoice in ill;
All sworn by Styx, with pestilential blasts
To wither every virtue in the bud;
To keep the door of dark conspiracy,
And snuff the grateful fumes of human blood,
From sulphur blue, or your red beds of fire,
Or your black ebon thrones, auspicious rise;
And, bursting through the barriers of this world,
Stand in dread contrast to the golden sun;
Fright day-light hence with your infernal smiles,
And howl aloud your formidable joy,
While I transport you with the fair record

Of what your faithful minister has done,
Beyond your inspiration, self-impell'd,
To spread your empire, and secure his own.
Hear, and applaud.—Now, Pericles! proceed:
Speak; is the letter forg'd?

PERICLES.

This moment; and might cheat
The cunning eye of jealousy itself.

PERSEUS.

'Tis well: Art thou appris'd of what hath pass'd
Since last we parted?

PERICLES.

No, my lord.

PERSEUS.

Then rouse
Thy whole attention: Here we are in private:
Know then, my Pericles, the mock encounter
I turn'd, as taught by thee, to real rage.
But blasted be the cowards which I led!
They trembled at a boy.

PERICLES.

Ha!

PERSEUS.

Mark me well:
The villains fled; but soon my prudence turn'd
To good account that momentary shame.
Thus——I pretend 'twas voluntary flight
To save a brother's blood: accusing him
As author of that conflict I declin'd,
And he pursu'd with ardour and success.

PERICLES.

That 's artful. What ensu'd?

PERSEUS.

The banquet follow'd,
Held by the victor, as our rites require:
To which his easy nature, soon appeas'd,
Invited me. I went not; but sent spies
To learn what pass'd: which spies, by chance detected,
(Observe me) were ill us'd.

PERICLES.

By whom? your brother?

PERSEUS.

No; by his sons of riot. He soon after,
Not knowing that my servants were abus'd,
Kind, and gay-hearted, came to visit me.
They, who misus'd my spies, for self-defence,
Conceal'd their arms beneath the robes of peace.
Of this inform'd, again my genius serv'd me.——

PERICLES.

You took occasion, from these few in arms,
To charge a murderous assault on all.

PERSEUS.

True, Pericles: But mark my whole address:
Against my brother swift I bar my gates;
Fly to my father; and, with artful tears,
Accuse Demetrius; first, of turning sports,
And guiltless exercise, to mortal rage;
Then, of inviting me (still blacker guilt!)
To smiling death in an envenom'd bowl;

And, last, that, both these failing, mad with rage,
He threw his schemes of baffled art aside,
And with arm'd men avow'dly sought my life.

PERICLES.

Three startling articles, and well concerted,
Following each other in an easy train,
With fair similitude of truth! But, sir,
How bore your father?

PERSEUS.

Oh! he shook! he fell!
Nor was his fleeting soul recall'd with ease.

PERICLES.

What said he, when recover'd?

PERSEUS.

His resolve
I know not yet: but see, his minion comes;
And comes, perhaps, to tell me—But I 'll go;
Sustain my part, and echo loud my wrongs.
Nought so like innocence, as perfect guilt.
If he brings aught of moment, you 'll inform me.

[*As* Perseus *goes off, he is seized by officers.*

Enter DYMAS.

PERICLES.

How fares the king?

DYMAS.

E'en as an aged oak
Push'd too and fro, the labour of the storm;
Whose largest branches are struck off by thunder;

Yet still he lives, and on the mountain groans;
Strong in affliction, awful from his wounds,
And more rever'd in ruin than in glory.

PERICLES.

I hear prince Perseus has accus'd his brother.

DYMAS.

True; and the king's commands are now gone forth
To throw them both in chains; for farther thought
Makes Philip doubt the truth of Perseus' charge.

PERICLES.

What then is his design?

DYMAS.

They both this hour
Must plead their cause before him: Nay, already,
His nobles, judges, counsellors, are met;
And public justice wears her sternest form:
A more momentous trial ne'er was known;
Whether the pleaders you survey as brothers,
Or princes known in arts, or fam'd for arms;
Whether you ponder, in their awful judge
The tender parent, or the mighty king.
Greece, Athens, hears the cause: The great result
Is life, or death; is infamy, or fame. [*Trumpets.*

PERICLES.

What trumpets these?

DYMAS.

They summon to the court.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene draws; the Court, King, *&c.*
Enter Dymas, *and takes his place by the* King.

KING.

Bring forth the prisoners.
Strange trial this! Here sit I to debate,
Which vital limb to lop, nor that to save,
But render wretched life more wretched still.
What see I, but heaven's vengeance, in my sons?
Their guilt a scourge for mine: 'Tis thus heaven writes
Its awful meaning, plain in human deeds,
And language leaves to man.

Enter Perseus *and* Demetrius *in chains, from different sides of the stage;* Perseus *followed by* Pericles, *and* Demetrius *by* Antigonus.

DYMAS.

Dread sir, your sons.

KING.

I have no sons; and that I ever had,
Is now my heaviest curse: And yet what care,
What pains, I took to curb their rising rage!
How often have I rang'd through history
To find examples for their private use?
The Theban brothers did I set before them——
What blood! what desolation! but in vain!
For thee, Demetrius, did I go to Rome,
And bring thee patterns thence of brothers' love;
The Quintii, and the Scipio's: but in vain!
If I 'm a monarch, where is your obedience?
If I 'm a father, where's your duty to me?
If old, your veneration due to years?

But I have wept, and you have sworn, in vain!
I had your ear, and enmity your heart.
How was this morning's counsel thrown away!
How happy is your mother in the grave!
She, when she bore you, suffer'd less: Her pangs,
Her pungent pangs, throb through the father's heart.

DEMETRIUS.

You can't condemn me, sir, to worse than this.

KING.

Than what, thou young deceiver? While I live,
You both with impious wishes grasp my sceptre:
Nothing is sacred, nothing dear but empire;
Brother, nor father, can you bear; fierce lust
Of empire burns, extinguish'd all beside.
Why pant you for it? To give others awe?
Be therefore aw'd yourselves, and tremble at it,
While in a father's hand.

DYMAS.

My lord, your warmth
Defers your business.

KING.

Am I then too warm?
They that should shelter me from every blast,
To be themselves the storm! Oh! how Rome triumphs!
Oh! how they bring this hoary head to shame!
Conquest and fame, the labour of my life,
Now turn against me; and call in the world
To gaze at what was Philip, but who now
Wants e'en the wretch's privilege—a wish.
What can I wish? Demetrius may be guiltless.

What then is Perseus? Judgment hangs as yet
Doubtful o'er them; but I 'm condemn'd already;
For both are mine; and one—is foul as hell.
Should these two hands wage war, (these hands less dear!)
What boots it which prevails? In both I bleed.
But I have done. Speak, Perseus, and at large;
You 'll have no second hearing. Thou forbear.
[*To* Demetrius.

PERSEUS.

Speak!—'Twas with the utmost struggle I forbore.
These chains were scarce design'd to reach my tongue:
Their trespass is sufficient, stopping here.
[*Shewing his arms.*
These chains! for what? Are chains for innocence?
Not so; for, see, Demetrius wears them too.
Fool that I was, to tremble at vain laws;
Nor learn from him defiance of their frown;
Since innocence and guilt are us'd alike;
Blood-thirsty stabbers, and their destin'd prey;
Perseus, and He—I will not call him brother:
[*Pointing at* Demetrius.
He wants not that enhancement of his guilt.

KING.

But closer to the point; and lay before us
Your whole deportment this ill-fated day.

PERSEUS.

Scarce was he cool from that embrace this morning,
Which you enjoin'd, and I sincerely gave;
Nor thought he plann'd my death within my arms;

When, holding vile oaths, honour, duty, love,
He fir'd our friendly sports to martial rage.
If war, why not fair war? But that has danger.
From hostile conflict, as from brothers' play,
He blush'd not to invite me to his banquet.
I went not; and in that was I to blame?
Think you, there nothing had been found but peace,
From whence soon after sally'd armed men?
Think you I nothing had to fear from swords,
When from their foils I scarce escap'd with life?
Or poison might his valour suit as well:—
This pass'd, as suits his wisdom, Macedonians!
Who volts o'er elder brothers to a throne,
With an arm'd rout he came to visit me.
Did I refuse to go, a bidden guest?
And should I welcome him, a threat'ning foe?
Resenting my refusal; boiling for revenge!

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis false.

ANTIGONUS.

Forbear.—The king!

PERSEUS.

Had I received them,
You now had mourn'd my death, not heard my cause.—
Dares he deny he brought an armed throng?
Call those I name; who dare this deed, dare all;
Yet will not dare deny, that this is true.
My death alone can yield a stronger proof;
Will no less proof than that content a father?

PERICLES.

Perseus, you see, has art, as well as fire;
Nor have the wars worn Athens from his tongue.

PERSEUS.

Let him, who seeks to bathe in brother's blood,
Not find well-pleas'd the fountain whence it flow'd;
Let him, who shudders at a brother's knife,
Find refuge in the bosom of a father:
For where else can I fly? whom else implore?
I have no Romans, with their eagles' wings,
To shelter me; Demetrius borrows those,
To mount full rebel-high: I have their hatred;
And, thanks to heaven! deserve it: Good Demetrius
Can see your towns and kingdoms torn away
By these protectors; and ne'er lose his temper.
My weakness! I confess, it makes me rave;
It makes me weep—and my tears rarely flow.

PERICLES.

Was ever stronger proof of filial love?

PERSEUS.

Vain are Rome's hopes, while you and I survive:
But should the sword take me, and age my father,
(Heaven grant they leave him to the stroke of age!)
The kingdom, and the king, are both their own;
A duteous loyal king, a sceptred slave,
A willing Macedonian slave to Rome.

KING.

First let an earthquake swallow Macedonia.

PERSEUS.

How, at such news, would Hannibal rejoice?

How the great shade of Alexander smile?
The thought quite choaks me up: I can no more.

KING.

Proceed!

PERSEUS.

No, sir——Why have I spoke at all?
'Twas needless: Philip justifies my charge;
Philip's the single witness which I call,
To prove Demetrius guilty.

KING.

What dost mean?

PERSEUS.

What mean I, sir! what mean I!—To run mad;
For who, unshaken both in heart and brain,
Can recollect it!

KING.

What?

PERSEUS.

This morning's insult.
This morning they proclaim'd him Philip's king:
This morning they forgave you for his sake.
O pardon, pardon!—I could strike him dead.

KING.

More temper.

PERSEUS.

Not more truth; that cannot be!
And that it cannot, one proof can't escape you;
For what but truth could make me, sir, so bold?
Rome puts forth all her strength to crown her minion.
Demetrius' vices, thriving of themselves,

Her fulsome flatt'ries dung to ranker growth.
Demetrius is the burden of her song;
Each river, hill, and dale, has learnt his name;
While elder Perseus in a whisper dies.
Demetrius treats; Demetrius gives us peace;
Demetrius is our god, and would be so.——
My sight is short: Look on him you that can:
What sage experience sits upon his brow,
What awful marks of wisdom, who vouchsafes
To patronize a father, and a king?
Such patronage is treason.

KING.

Treason! death!

PERSEUS.

Nor let the ties of blood bind up the hands
Of justice: Nature's ties are broke already:
For, who contend before you?—Your two sons?—
No; read aright; 'tis Macedon and Rome.
A well-mask'd foreigner, and your—only son.
Guard of your life, and—exile of your love.
Now, bear me to my dungeon: what so fit
As darkness, chains, and death, for such a traitor?

KING.

Speak, Demetrius.

ANTIGONUS.

My lord, he cannot speak; accept his tears-
Instead of words.

PERSEUS.

His tears are false as they—
Now, with fine phrase, and foppery of tongue,

More graceful action, and a smoother tone,
That orator of fable, and fair face,
Will steal on your brib'd hearts, and, as you listen,
Plain truth, and I, plain Perseus, are forgot.

DEMETRIUS.

My father! king! and judge! thrice awful power!
Your son, your subject, and your prisoner, hear;
Thrice humble state! If I have grace of speech,
(Which gives, it seems, offence) be that no crime
Which oft has serv'd my country, and my king;
Nor in my brother let it pass for virtue,
That, as he is, ungracious he would seem:
For, oh! he wants not art, though grace may fail him.
The wonted aids of those that are accus'd,
Has my accuser seiz'd: He shed false tears,
That my true sorrows might suspected flow:
He seeks my life, and calls me murderer;
And vows no refuge can he find on earth,
That I may want it in a father's arms;
Those arms, to which e'en strangers fly for safety.

KING.

Speak to your charge.

DEMETRIUS.

He charges me with treason:
If I'm a traitor, if I league with Rome,
Why did his zeal forbear me till this hour?
Was treason then no crime, till (as he feigns)
I sought his life? Dares Perseus hold, so much,
His father's welfare cheaper than his own?
Less cause have I, a brother, to complain.

He says, I wade for empire through his blood:
He says, I place my confidence in Rome:
Why murder him, if Rome will crown my brow?
Will then a sceptre, dipp'd in brother's blood,
Conciliate love, and make my reign secure?
False are both charges; and he proves them false,
By placing them together.

ANTIGONUS.

That's well urg'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Mark, sir, how Perseus, unawares, absolves me
From guilt in all, by loading all with guilt.
Did I design him poison at my feast?
Why then did I provoke him in the field?
That, as he did, he might refuse to come?
When angry he refus'd, I should have sooth'd
His rous'd resentment, and deferr'd the blow;
Not destin'd him that moment to my sword,
Which I before instructed him to shun.
Through fear of death, did he decline my banquet?
Could I expect admittance then at his?
These numerous pleas at variance, overthrow
Each other, and are advocates for me.

PERSEUS.

No, sir; Posthumius is his advocate.

KING.

Art thou afraid that I should hear him out?

DEMETRIUS.

Quit then this picture, this well-painted fear,
And come to that which touches him indeed,

Why is Demetrius not despis'd of all,
His second in endowments, as in birth?
How dare I draw the thoughts of Macedon?
How dare I gain esteem with foreign powers?
Esteem, when gain'd, how dare I to preserve?
These are his secret thoughts; these burn within;
These sting up accusations in his soul;
Turn friendly visits to foul fraud, and murder;
And pour in poison to the bowl of love.
Merit is treason in a younger brother.

KING.

But clear your conduct with regard to Rome.

DEMETRIUS.

Alas! dread sir, I grieve to find set down
Among my crimes, what ought to be my praise.
That I went hostage, or ambassador,
Was Philip's high command, not my request:
Indeed, when there, in both those characters,
I bore in mind to whom I owe my birth:
Rome's favour follow'd. If it is a crime
To be regarded, spare a crime you caus'd;
Caus'd by your orders, and examples too.
True, I'm Rome's friend, while Rome is your ally:
When not, this hostage, this ambassador,
So dear, stands forth the fiercest of her foes;
At your command, flies swift on wings of fire,
The native thunder of a father's arm.

ANTIGONUS.

There spoke, at once, the hero, and the son.

DEMETRIUS.

To close—To thee, I grant, some thanks are due;
[*Speaking to* Perseus.
Not for thy kindness, but malignity:
Thy character's my friend, though thou my foe:
For, say, whose temper promises most guilt?
Perseus, importunate, demands my death:
I do not ask for his: Ah! no; I feel
Too pow'rful nature pleading for him here:
But were there no fraternal tie to bind me,
A son of Philip must be dear to me.
If you, my father, had been angry with me,
An elder brother, a less awful parent,
He should asswage you, he should intercede,
Soften my failings, and indulge my youth:
But my asylum drops its character;
I find not there my rescue, but my ruin.

PERSEUS.

His bold assurance——

KING.

Do not interrupt him;
But let thy brother finish his defence.

DEMETRIUS.

O Perseus! how I tremble as I speak!
Where is a brother's voice; a brother's eye?
Where is the melting of a brother's heart?
Where is our awful father's dread command?
Where a dear, dying mother's last request?
Forgot, scorn'd, hated, trodden under foot!
Thy heart, how dead to every call of nature!

Unson'd! unbrother'd! nay, unhumaniz'd!
Far from affection, as thou 'rt near in blood!
Oh! Perseus, Perseus!—But my heart 's too full.
[*Falls on* Antigonus.

KING.

Support him.

PERSEUS.

Vengeance overtake his crimes.

KING.

No more!

ANTIGONUS.

See, from his hoary brow, he wipes the dew,
Which agony wrings from him.

KING.

Oh! my friend,
These boys at strife, like Ætna's struggling flames,
Convulsions cause, and make a mountain shake;
Shake Philip's firmness, and convulse his heart;
And, with a fiery flood of civil war,
Threaten to deluge my divided land.
I 've heard them both; by neither am convinc'd:
And yet Demetrius' words went through my heart.—
A double crime, Demetrius, is your charge;
Fondness for Rome, and hatred to your brother.
If you can clear your innocence in one,
'Twill give us cause to think you wrong'd in both.

DEMETRIUS.

How shall I clear it, sir?

KING.

This honest man

Detests the Romans: If you wed his daughter,
Rome's foe becomes the guardian of your faith.

DEMETRIUS.

I told you, sir, when I return'd from Rome——

KING.

How—Dost thou want an absolute command?
Your brother, father, country, all exact it.

ANTIGONUS. [*aside to* Demetrius.]

See yonder guards at hand, if you refuse.
Nay, more; a father, so distress'd, demands
A son's compassion, to becalm his heart.
Oh! sir, comply.

DEMETRIUS. [*aside to* Antigonus.]

There! there! indeed, you touch me!
Besides, if I 'm confin'd, and Perseus free,
I never, never, shall behold her more.——
Pardon, ye gods! an artifice forc'd on me.
Dread sir, your son complies. [*To the king.*

DYMAS.

Astonishment!

KING.

Strike off his chains. Nay, Perseus too is free:
They wear no bonds, but those of duty, now.
Dymas, go thank the prince: he weds your daughter;
And highest honours pay your high desert.

[*Exeunt all but* Dymas *and* Demetrius.

DYMAS.

O, sir, without presumption, may I dare
To lift my ravish'd thought?——

DEMETRIUS.

In what I've done
I paid a duty to my father's will;
And set you an example, where 'tis due,
Of not withholding yours.

DYMAS.

My duty, sir,
To you, can never fail.

DEMETRIUS.

Then, Dymas, I request thee,
Go seek the king, and save me from a marriage
My brother has contriv'd, in artful malice,
To make me lose my father, or my love.
Go, charge the just refusal on thyself.

DYMAS.

What Philip authorizes me to wish,
You, sir, may disappoint: But, to take on me
The load of the refusal——

DEMETRIUS.

Is no more
Than Dymas owes his honour, if he'd shun
The natural surmise, that he concurr'd
In brewing this foul treason.

DYMAS.

Sir, the king
Knows what he does; and if he seeks my glory——

DEMETRIUS.

In a degree destructive of his own,
'Tis yours to disappoint him, or renounce
Your duty to your king.

DYMAS.

You 'll better tell——

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, better tell the king, he wounds his honour,
By lifting up a minion from the dust,
And mating him with princes. Use your power
Against yourself: Yes, use it, like a man,
In serving him who gave it. Thus you 'll make
Indulgence, justice, and absolve your master.
Though kings delight in raising what they love,
Less owe they to themselves, than to the throne;
Nor must they prostitute its majesty,
To swell a subject's pride, howe'er deserving.

DYMAS.

What the king grants me——

DEMETRIUS.

What a king ought not, that he cannot give;
And what is more than meet from princes' bounty,
Is plunder, not a grant. Think you, his honour
A perquisite belonging to your place,
As favourite paramount? Preserve the king
From doing wrong, though wrong is done for you;
And shew, 'tis not in favour to corrupt thee.

DYMAS.

I sought not, sir, this honour.

DEMETRIUS.

But would take it.
True majesty 's the very soul of kings;
And rectitude 's the soul of majesty:
If mining minions sap that rectitude,

The king may live, but majesty expires:
And he that lessens majesty, impairs
That just obedience public good requires;
Doubly a traitor, to the crown, and state.

DYMAS.

Must I refuse what Philip's pleas'd to give?

DEMETRIUS.

Can a king give thee more than is his own?
Know, a king's dignity is public wealth;
On that subsists the nation's fame, and power.
Shall fawning sycophants, to plump themselves,
Eat up their master, and dethrone his glory?
What are such wretches? What, but vapours foul,
From fens and bogs, by royal beams exhal'd,
That radiance intercepting, which should cheer
The land at large? Hence subjects' hearts grow cold,
And frozen loyalty forgets to flow:
But, then 'tis slipp'ry standing for the minion.
Stains on his ermin, to their royal master
Such miscreants are; not jewels in his crown.
If you persist, sir—But, of words, no more!
To me, to threat, is harder than to do!

DYMAS.

Let me embrace this genuine son of empire.
When the debates divide the doubtful land,
Should I not know the prince most fit to reign?
I've tried you, as an eagle tries her young,
And find, your dauntless eye is fix'd on glory.
I'll to the king, and your commands obey.——
We must give young men opiates in a fever. [*aside.*

Yes, boy, I will obey thee, to thy ruin.
Erixene shall strike thee dead for this. [*Exit* Dymas.

DEMETRIUS.

These statesmen nothing woo, but gold and power.
I'm a bold advocate for other love;
Though, at their bar, indicted for a fool.
When reason, like the skilful charioteer,
Can break the fiery passions to the bit,
And, spite of their licentious sallies, keep
The radiant track of glory; passions, then,
Are aids and ornaments. Triumphant reason,
Firm in her seat, and swift in her career,
Enjoys their violence, and, smiling, thanks
Their formidable flame, for high renown.
Take then my soul, fair maid! 'tis wholly thine;
And thence I feel an energy divine.
When objects, worthy praise, our hearts approve,
Each virtue grows on consecrated love:
And, sure, soft passion claims to be forgiven,
When love of beauty is the love of Heaven.

ACT IV.

Enter ERIXENE *and* DELIA.

ERIXENE.

'Tis plain! 'tis plain! this marriage gains her father.
He join'd to Rome the crown. Thy words were true:
He woos the diadem; that diadem which I
Despis'd for him. O, how unlike our loves!
But it is well: he gives me my revenge.
Wed Dymas' daughter! What a fall is there?
Not the world's empire could repair his glory.

DELIA.

Madam, you can't be mov'd too much! But why
More now than at the first?

ERIXENE.

At first I doubted:
For who, that lov'd like me, could have believ'd?
I disbeliev'd what Pericles reported;
And thought it Perseus' art to wound our loves.
But when the good Antigonus, sworn friend
To false Demetrius, when his word confirm'd it,
Then passion took me, as the northern blast
An autumn leaf. O gods! the dreadful whirl!
But, while I speak, he 's with her: laughs, and plays;
Mingles his dalliance with insulting mirth;
To this new goddess offers up my tears;

Yes, with my shame and torture, woos her love.
I see, I hear, I feel it! O these raging fires!
Can then the thing we scorn give so much pain?

DELIA.

Madam, these transports give him cause to triumph.

ERIXENE.

I vent my grief to thee; he ne'er shall know it.
If I can't conquer, I'll conceal my passion;
And stifle all its pangs beneath disdain.

DELIA.

The greatest minds are most relenting too:
If then Demetrius should repent his crime——

ERIXENE.

If still my passion burns, it shall burn inward:
On the fierce rack in silence I'll expire,
Before one sigh escape me——He repent!
What wild extravagance of thought is thine?
But did he: Who repents, has once been false:
In love, repentance but declares our guilt;
And injur'd honour—shall exact its due.
In vain his love, nay mine should groan in vain!
Both are devoted. Vengeance, vengeance, reigns!
Our first love murder'd, is the sharpest pang
A human heart can feel.

DELIA.

The king approaches.

Enter the KING, *&c.*

KING.

Madam, at length we see the dawn of peace,
And hope an end of our domestic jars.

The jealous Perseus can no longer fear
Demetrius is a Roman; since this day
Makes him the son of Dymas, Rome's worst foe.

ERIXENE.

Already, sir, I 've heard, and heard with joy,
Th' important news.

KING.

To make our bliss run o'er,
You, madam, will complete what Heaven begins;
And save the love-sick Perseus from despair:
That marriage would leave Rome without pretence
To touch our conquest; and for ever join
To these dominions long-disputed Thrace.

Enter DYMAS.

ERIXENE.

Though Thrace by conquest stoops to Macedon,
I know my rank, and would preserve its due.
With meditated coldness have I heard
Prince Perseus' vows; unwilling to consent,
Before restor'd to my forefathers' throne,
Lest that consent should merit little thanks,
As flowing less from choice than your command:
But since the Roman pride will find account
In my persisting still; and Philip suffer;
I quit the lofty thought on which I stood,
And yield to your request.

KING.

Indulgent gods!
Blest moment! How will this with transport fill
The doubtful Perseus, after years of pain!

DYMAS.

My lord, I 've heard what pass'd, and give you joy
Of Perseus' nuptials, which your state requires:
But for Demetrius'—think of those no more.
Far from accepting such a load of glory,
I bring, I bring, my lord, this forfeit head
Due to my bold refusal.

KING.

Dares the boy
Fall from his promise; and impose on thee
Forc'd disobedience to my royal pleasure?

DYMAS.

No, my most honour'd lord, there, there's my crime:
Fond of the maid, with ardour he press'd on:
But should I dare pollute his blood with mine?
But you, sir, authorize it—still more base,
To wrong a master so profusely kind.

KING.

That man is noble on whom Philip smiles.
Come, come, there's something more in this—explain.

DYMAS.

Why am I forc'd on this ungrateful office?
Yet can't I tell you more than fame has told;
Which says Demetrius is in league with Rome.
Why weds ambition then an humble maid,
But to gain me to treason? What then follows?
They'll say the subtle statesman plann'd this marriage,
To raise his blood into his master's throne.
No, sir, preserve my fame; let life suffice.

Enter PERICLES.

PERICLES.

Sir, your ambassadors arriv'd from Rome—

[*Presents a letter.*

KING.

Ha! I must read it—this will tell me more.

[*After reading it.*

O princess! now our only comfort flows
From your indulgence to my better son.
This dreadful news precipitates my wish.
To keep rapacious Rome from seizing Thrace,
You cannot wed too soon: My fair ally!
What if you bless me and my son to-morrow?

ERIXENE.

Since you request, and your affairs demand it,
Without a blush—I think I may comply.

KING.

O daughter! but no more—The gods will thank you:
I go to bless my Perseus with the news.

DYMAS.

Thus the boy 's dead in empire, and in love.

[*Exeunt* King, Dymas, *&c.*

ERIXENE.

I triumph! I 'm reveng'd! I reign! I reign!
Nor thank Demetrius' treason for a crown.
Love is our own cause, honour is the gods'.
I can be glorious without happiness;
But without glory never can be blest——

DELIA.

'Tis well: but can you wed the man you scorn?

ERIXENE.

Wed any thing for vengeance on the perjur'd.
I'll now insult him from a higher sphere:
This unexpected turn may gall his pride;
Whate'er has pangs for him, has charms for me.

DELIA.

A rooted love is scarce so soon remov'd.

ERIXENE.

If not, the greater virtue to control it;
And strike at his heart, though 'tis through my own.

DELIA.

I can't but praise this triumph; yet I dread
The combat still. And see, the foe draws near.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

Erixene!

ERIXENE.

My lord!

DEMETRIUS.

My pale cheek speaks,
My trembling limbs prevent my faltering tongue,
And ask you——

ERIXENE.

What, my lord?

DEMETRIUS.

My lord!—Her eyes
Confirm it true; and yet, without a crime,
I can't believe it. O Erixene——

ERIXENE.

I guess your meaning, sir; but am surpris'd
That Dymas' son should think of aught I do.

DEMETRIUS.

False are my senses! false both ear and eye!
All, all be rather false than her I love!

ERIXENE.

She pass'd not, sir, this way.

DEMETRIUS.

Is then my pain
Your sport? And can Erixene pretend
Herself deceiv'd, by what deceiv'd the king?
An artifice made use of for your sake;
A proof, not violation, of my love.

ERIXENE.

I thought not of your love, nor artifice:
Both were forgot; or rather, never known.
But without artifice I tell you this;
Your brother lays his sceptre at my feet,
And whose example bids my heart resist
The charms of empire?

DEMETRIUS.

This is woman's skill:
You cease to love, and from my conduct strive
To labour an excuse. For if indeed
You thought me false, had you been thus serene,
Calm, and unruffled? No; my heart says, No.
Passions, if great, though turn'd to their reverse,
Keep their degree, and are great passions still.

And she who, when she thinks her lover false,
Retains her temper, never lost her heart.

ERIXENE.

That I 'm serene, says not I never lov'd.
Indeed the vulgar float as passion drives;
But noble minds have reason for their queen.
While you deserv'd, my passion was sincere;
You change, my passion dies. But pardon, sir,
If my vain mind thinks anger is too much:
Take my neglect; I can afford no more.

DEMETRIUS.

No: rage! flame! thunder! give a thousand deaths!
Oh! rescue me from this more dreadful calm!
This curst indifference! which, like a frost
In northern seas, outdoes the fiercest storm.
Commanded by my father to comply,
I feign'd obedience:—Had I then refus'd——

ERIXENE.

I grant the consequence had been most dreadful!
I grant that Dymas' daughter had been angry.

DEMETRIUS.

Ask Dymas with what rage——

ERIXENE.

You well might rage,
To be refus'd.

DEMETRIUS.

Refus'd?

ERIXENE.

He told your secret;
The king, and I, and all the court can witness.

DEMETRIUS.

Refus'd! false villain! O the perjur'd slave!
Hell-born impostor! Madam, 'tis most false!
Warm from my heart is every word I speak!
The villain lies! Believe the pangs that rend me;
Believe the witness streaming from my eyes,
And let me speak no more.

ERIXENE.

I do believe
Your grief sincere. I've heard the maid is fair.

DEMETRIUS.

Proceed; and thus indeed commit that crime
You falsely charge on me. The crown has charm'd you:
How warm this morning did you press my flight?
The cause is plain: An outrag'd lover's groan,
And dying agony, molest your ear,
And hurt the music of a nuptial song.

ERIXENE.

Since your inconstancy persists to charge
Its crime on my ambition, I'll be kind,
And leave you in possession of an error,
Of which you seem so fond.

DEMETRIUS.

Ah! stay one moment!

Enter PERSEUS and PERICLES.

PERSEUS.

Erixene!

DEMETRIUS.

Distraction! [*Starting.*]

ERIXENE.

'Tis well tim'd.
My lord, your brother doubts if I'm sincere,
And thinks (an error natural to him)
I'll break my vow to you.—You'll clear my fame,
And labour to convince him, that to-morrow,
Erixene's at once a bride and queen.

[*Exit* Erixene.

PERSEUS.

When I have work'd him up to violence,
Bring thou the king, and pity my distress.

[*To* Pericles, *who goes out.*

DEMETRIUS.

On what extremes extreme distress impels me?
In things impossible I put my trust:
I, in my only brother, find a foe;
Yet in my rival, hope the greatest friend.
When all our hopes are lodg'd in such expedients,
'Tis as if poison were our only food;
And death was call'd on as the guard of life.

PERSEUS.

Why dost thou droop?

DEMETRIUS.

Because I'm dead: quite dead
To hope; and yet rebellious to despair;
Like ghosts unbless'd, that burst the bars of death.
Strange is my conduct?—Stranger my distress;
Beyond example both! Who e'er before me
Press'd his worst foe, to prove his truest friend?
But though thou 'rt not my brother, thou 'rt a man;

And, if a man, compassionate the worst
That man can feel! though found that worst in me.

PERSEUS.

What wouldst?

DEMETRIUS.

Unclinch thy talons from thy prey;
Let the dove fly to this her nest again.
[*Striking his breast.*
For, oh! the maid's unalienably mine,
Tho' now through rage run mad, and turn'd to thee.
How often have I languish'd at her feet?
Bask'd in her eye, and revell'd in her smile?
How often, as she listen'd to my vows,
Trembling and pale with agonies of joy,
Have I left earth, and mounted to the stars?

PERSEUS.

There Dymas' daughter shone above the rest,
Illustrious in thy sight.

DEMETRIUS.

Thy taunt, how false!——
I no less press your interest than my own.
Think you 'tis possible her heart, so long
Inclin'd to me, the price of all my vows,
Purchas'd by tears and groans, and paid me down
In tenderest returns of love divine,
Can in one day be yours?——Impossible!

PERSEUS.

If I 'm deceiv'd, I 'm pleas'd with the deceit.
How my heart dances in the golden dream!
In pity do not wake me till to-morrow.

DEMETRIUS.

Then thou 'lt wake distracted.—Trust me, brother!
She gives her hand alone.

PERSEUS.

Nor need I more;
That hand 's enough that brings a sceptre in it.
I scorn a prince who weds with meaner views.
Her duty 's mine, and I conceive small pain
From your sweet error, that her love is yours.
I'm pleas'd such cordial thoughts of your own merit
Support you in distress.

DEMETRIUS.

Inhuman Perseus!
If pity dwells within the heart of man,
If due that pity to the last distress,
Pity a lover exquisitely pain'd;
A lover exquisitely pain'd by you.
Oh! in the name of all the gods, relent!
Give me my princess! give her to my throes!
Amidst a thousand you may choose a love;
The spacious earth contains but one for me.——
But oh! I rave: Art thou not he, the man
Who drinks my groans like music at his ear?
And would as wine, as nectar, drink my blood?
Are all my hopes of mercy lodg'd in thee?
O rigid gods! and shall I then fall down!
Embrace thy feet, and bathe them with my tears?
Yes, I will drown thee with my tears, my blood,
So thou afford a human ear to pangs,
A brother's pangs, a brother's broken heart.

PERSEUS.

Pardon, Demètrius, but the princess calls,
And I am bound to go.

DEMETRIUS.

O stay. [*Laying hold of him.*

PERSEUS.

You tremble.

DEMETRIUS.

"The princess calls, and you are bound to go?"

PERSEUS.

E'en so.

DEMETRIUS.

What princess?

PERSEUS.

Mine.

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis false.

PERSEUS.

Unhand me.

DEMETRIUS.

What! see, talk, touch, nay taste her; like a bee
Draw honey from her wounded lip, while I
Am stung to death!

PERSEUS.

The triumph once was yours.

DEMETRIUS.

Rip up my breast, or you shall never stir.
My heart may visit her! O! take it with you.
Have I not seen her, where she has not been?

Have I not clasp'd her shadow? trod her steps?
Transported trod! as if they led to heaven?
Each morn my life I lighted at her eye,
And every evening, at its close, expir'd.
[*Bursts into tears.*

PERSEUS.

Fie! thou 'rt a Roman; can a Roman weep?
Sure Alexander's helmet can sustain
Far heavier strokes than these. For shame, Demetrius.
E'en snatch up the next Sabine in thy way,
'Twill do as well. [*Going.*

DEMETRIUS.

By Heaven, you shall not stir:
Long as I live, I stand a world between you,
And keep you distant as the poles asunder.
Who takes my love, in mercy takes my life;
Thy bloody pass cleave through thy brother's breast.
I beg, I challenge, I provoke my death.
[*His hand upon his sword.*

Enter KING *and* DYMAS.

PERSEUS.

You will not murder me?

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, you and all.

KING.

How like a tiger foaming o'er his prey!——

PERSEUS.

Now, sir, believe your eye, believe your ear,
And still believe me perjur'd, as this morning.

KING.

Heaven's wrath exhausted, there's no more to fear.
My darling son found criminal in all.

DEMETRIUS.

That villain there to blast me! Yes, I'll speak;
For what have I to fear, who feel the worst?
T is time the truth were known. That villain, sir,
Has cleft my heart, and laughs to see it bleed;
But his confession shall redeem my fame,
And reinthrone me in my princess' smile;
Or, I'll return that false embrace he gave me,
And stab him in your sight.

KING.

Hold, insolent!
Where 's your respect to me?

DEMETRIUS.

O royal sir!
That has undone me. Through respect I gave
A feign'd consent, which his black artifice
Has turn'd to my destruction. I refus'd
That slave's, that cursed slave's, that statesman's daughter,
And he pretends she was refus'd by him.
Hence, hence, this desolation. Nought I fear,
Though nature groan her last. And shall he then
Escape and triumph?

KING.

Guards there! seize the prince!
The man you menace you shall learn to fear.

[*He is seized.*

DYMAS.

Hold, sir! not this for me! It is your son:
What is my life, though pour'd upon your feet?

KING.

Is this a son?

DEMETRIUS.

No, sir; my crime 's too great,
Which dares to vindicate a father's honour,
To catch the glories of a falling crown,
And save it from pollution. But I 've done.
I die, unless my princess is restor'd:
And if I die, by heaven and earth, and hell!
[*Pointing to* Dymas.
His sordid blood shall mingle with the dust;
And see if thence 'twill mount into the throne.
O sir! think of it! I 'll expect my fate. [*Exit* Dem.

KING.

And thou shalt have it.

DYMAS.

How, my lord; in tears!

KING.

As if the gods came down in evidence!
How many sudden rays of proof concur
To my conviction? Was ever equal boldness?
But 'tis no wonder from a brother-king;
[*Produces the forged letter.*
This king of Thrace—To-morrow he 'll be king
Of Macedon.——He therefore dies to-night.

PERSEUS. [*aside to* Dymas.]

And yet I doubt it; for I know his fondness.

Thou practise well the lesson I have taught thee,
While I put on a solemn face of woe,
Afflicted for a brother's early fall.———
Heaven knows with what regret—But, sir, your safety—
[*Presenting the mandate for* Demetrius' *death.*

KING.

What giv'st thou here?

DYMAS.

Your passport to renown.
You sign your apotheosis in that.
What scales the skies, but zeal for public good?

PERSEUS.

How god-like mercy?

DYMAS.

Mercy to mankind,
By treason aw'd.

KING. [*to* Perseus.]

Must then thy brother bleed?

[Dymas *seeming at a loss,* Perseus *whispers him, and gives a letter.*

DYMAS. [*looking on the letter.*]

No, sir; the king of Thrace.

KING.

Why that is true——
Yet who, if not a father, should forgive?

DYMAS.

Who, sir, if not a Philip, should be just?

KING. [*to* Dymas.]

Is 't not my son?

DYMAS.

If not, far less his guilt.

KING. [*to* Perseus.]

Is not my other Perseus?

PERSEUS.

Sir, I thank you;
That seeks your crown, and life.

KING.

And life?

DYMAS.

No, sir;
He 'll only take your crown; you still may live.

KING.

Heaven blast thee for that thought!

PERSEUS.

Why shakes my father?

KING.

It stabs, it gnaws, it harrows up my soul.
Is he not young? Was he not much indulg'd?
Gall'd by his brother? Doubted by his father?
Tempted by Rome? A nation to a boy?

DYMAS.

O a mere infant—that deposes kings.

KING.

No; once he sav'd my crown.

DYMAS.

And now would wear it.

KING.

How my head swims!

PERSEUS.

Nor strange; the task is hard.

DYMAS.

Yet scarce for him. Brutus was but a Roman:
[*Speaking as if he would not have the* King *hear.*
Yet like a Philip dar'd; and is immortal.

KING.

I hear thee, Dymas; give me then the mandate.
[*Going to sign, he stops short.*

DYMAS.

No wonder if his mother thus had paus'd.

PERSEUS. [*aside.*]

Rank cankers on thy tongue; why mention her?

KING.

O gods! I see her now; what am I doing?
[*Throws away the style.*
I see her dying eye let fall a tear
In favour of Demetrius.——Shall I stab
Her lovely image stampt on every feature?

DYMAS.

His soul escap'd it, sir.

KING.

Thou liest; begone.

[Perseus *and* Dymas *in great confusion:* Perseus *whispers* Dymas.

DYMAS. [*aside to* Perseus.]

True; that, or nought, will touch him.
If, sir, your mercy—— [*To the* King.

PERSEUS.

O speak on of mercy;

Mercy, the darling attribute of heaven.

DYMAS.

If you should spare him——

KING.

What if I should spare him?

DYMAS.

I dare not say—Your wrath again might rise.

KING.

Yes, if thou 'rt silent—What if I should spare him?

DYMAS.

Why if you should—proud Rome would thank you for it.

KING.

Rome!—Her applause more shocks me than his death.
O thou, death's orator! dread advocate
For bowelless severity! assist
My trembling hand, as thou hast steel'd my heart;
And if it is guilt in me, share the guilt.
He 's dead. [*Signs.*] And if I blot it with one tear,
Perseus, though less affected, will forgive me.

PERSEUS.

Forgive! sir, I applaud; and wish my sorrow
Was mild enough to weep.

[*The* King *going out, meets* Demetrius *in mourning, introduced by* Antigonus. *The* King *starts back, and drops on* Dymas. *Recovering, speaks.*

KING.

This, fate, is the tenth wave, and quite o'erwhelms me:
It less had shock'd me, had I met his ghost.

This is a plot to sentence me to death.——
What hast thou done, my mortal foe! thrown bars
[*To* Antigonus.
Athwart my glory? but thy scheme shall fail.
As rushing torrents sweep th' obstructed mound,
So Philip meets this mountain in his way,
Yet keeps his purpose still.
[Perseus *and* Pericles *whisper aside.*

PERICLES.

I can't but fear it.

PERSEUS.

I grant the danger great; yet don't despair:
Jove is against thee, Perseus on thy side.

ANTIGONUS.

The prince, dread sir, low on his bended knee——

KING.

This way, Antigonus.—Dost mark his bloom?
Grace in his aspect, grandeur in his mien?

ANTIGONUS.

I do.

KING.

'Tis false; take a king's word.—He's dead.—
That darling of my soul would stab me sleeping.
How dar'st thou start? Art thou the traitor's father?
If thou art pale, what is enough for me?——
How his grave yawns: Oh! that it were my own.

ANTIGONUS.

Mourn not the guilty.

KING.

No; he's innocent:

Death pays his debt to justice; and that done,
I grant him still my son; as such I love him:
Yes, and will clasp him to my breast, while yet
His clay is warm, nor moulders at my touch.

PERSEUS. [*aside.*]

A curse on that embrace.

DYMAS.

Nay, worse; he weeps.

KING.

Poor boy, be not deceiv'd by my compassion;
My tears are cruel, and I groan thy death.

DEMETRIUS.

And am I then to die? If death 's decreed,
Stab me yourself, nor give me to the knife
Of midnight ruffians, that have forg'd my crimes.
For you I beg, for you I pour my tears;
You are deceiv'd, dishonour'd; I am only slain.
Oh! father.

KING.

Father?—There 's no father here;
Forbear to wound me with that tender name;
Nor raise all nature up in arms against me.

DEMETRIUS.

My father! guardian! friend! nay, deity!
What less than gods give being, life, and death!
My dying mother——

KING.

Hold thy peace, I charge thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Pressing your hand, and bathing it with tears,

Bequeath'd your tenderness for her to me;
And, low on earth, my legacy I claim,
Clasping your knee, though banish'd from your breast.

KING.

My knees!—Would that were all; he grasps my heart.
Perseus, canst thou stand by and see me ruin'd?

[*Reaching his hand to* Perseus.

PERSEUS.

Loose, loose thy hold.—It is my father too.

KING.

Yes, Macedon, and thine; and I'll preserve thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Who once before preserv'd it from the Thracian?
And who, at Thrasymene, turn'd the lifted bolt
From Philip's hoary brow?

KING.

I'll hear no more.
O Perseus! Dymas! Pericles! assist me,
Unbind me, disenchant me, break this charm
Of nature, that accomplice with my foes;
Rend me, O rend me, from the friend of Rome!

PERSEUS.

Nay then, howe'er reluctant, aid I must.
The friend of Rome?—That severs you for ever;
Though most incorporate and strongly knit;
As lightning rends the knotted oak asunder.

DEMETRIUS.

In spite of lightning, I renew the tie;

And stubborn is the grasp of dying men.
Who's he that shall divide me from myself?
[Demetrius *is forced from the* King's *knees; on which, starting up, he flings his arms round his father.*
Still of a piece with him from whom I grew,
I'll bleed on my asylum, dart my soul
In this embrace, and thus my treason crown.

KING.

Who love yourselves, or Macedon, or me,
From the curs'd * eagle's talons wrench my crown;
And this barb'd arrow from my breast.—'Tis done;
[*Forced asunder.*
And the blood gushes after it.——I faint.

DYMAS.

Support the king!

PERSEUS.

While treason licks the dust.
[*Pointing at* Demetrius, *fallen in the struggle.*

DYMAS.

A field well fought.

PERSEUS.

And justice has prevail'd.

KING.

O that the traitor could conceal the son!
Farewell, once best beloy'd! still most deplor'd!
He, he who dooms thee, bleeds upon thy tomb.
[*Exit* King.

* The Roman ensign.

DEMETRIUS.

Prostrate on thee, my mother earth, be thou
Kinder than brother, or than father; open
And save me in thy bosom from my—friends:
Friends, sworn to wash their hands in guiltless tears,
And quench infernal thirst in kindred blood;
As if relation sever'd human hearts,
Or that destruction was the child of love.

PERSEUS.

Farewell, young traitor: if they ask below,
Who sent thee beardless down, say, Honest Perseus;
Whom reason sways, not instinct; who can strike
At horrid parricide, and flagrant treason,
Though through a bosom dearer than his own.
Think'st thou my tender heart can hate a brother?
The gods and Perseus war with nought but guilt.
But I must go. What, sir, your last commands
To your Erixene? She chides my stay. [*Exit* Pers.

DEMETRIUS.

Without the token of a brother's love,
He could not part; my death was not enough——
I came for mercy, and I find it here:——
And death is mercy, since my love is lost.
Alas! my father too; my heart aches for him:
And Perseus,—fain would I forgive e'en thee:
But Philip's sufferings cry too loud against it.
Blind author, and sure mourner of my death!
Father most dear! what pangs hast thou to come!
Like that poor wretch is thy unhappy doom,

Who, while in sleep his fever'd fancy glows,
Draws his keen sword, and sheathes it in his foes;
But, waking, starts upright, in wild surprise,
To feel warm blood glide round him as he lies;
To see his reeking hands in crimson dy'd,
And a pale corse extended by his side:
He views with horror what mad dreams have done,
And sinks, heart-broken, on a murder'd son.

ACT V.

KING and ANTIGONUS, POSTHUMIUS, meeting.

POSTHUMIUS.

WE, in behalf of our allies, O king!
Call'd on thee yesterday, to clear thy glory;
Nor wonder now that Philip is unjust
To strangers, who has murder'd his own son.

KING.

'Tis false.

POSTHUMIUS.

No thanks to Philip that he fled.

KING.

A traitor is no son.

POSTHUMIUS.

Heaven's vengeance on me,
If he refus'd not yesterday thy crown,
Though life and love both brib'd him to comply.

KING.

See there. [*Gives the letter.*

POSTHUMIUS.

'Tis not the consul's hand, or seal.

KING.

You 're his accomplices.

POSTHUMIUS.

We 're his avengers.

'Tis war.

KING.

Eternal war.

POSTHUMIUS.

Next time we meet—

KING.

Is in the Capitol.—Haste, fly my kingdom.

POSTHUMIUS.

No longer thine.

KING.

Yes, and proud Rome a province.

[*Exit* Posthumius.

They brave, they make, they tyrannize o'er kings.
The name of king the prostrate world ador'd,
Ere Romulus had call'd his thieves together.—
But let me pause.—Not Quintius' hand, or seal?
Doubt and impatience, like thick smoke and fire,
Cloud and torment my reason.

ANTIGONUS.

Sir, recall,
And re-examine those you sent to Rome:
You took their evidence in haste and anger.
Torture, if they refuse, will tell the truth.

KING.

Go, stop the nuptials till you hear from me.

[*Exeunt* King *and* Antigonus.

Enter ERIXENE *and* DELIA, *meeting.*

DELIA.

Madam, the prince, who fled from threaten'd death,
Attempting his escape to foreign realms,
Was lately taken at the city gates,
So strongly guarded by his father's powers;
And now, confin'd, expects his final doom.

ERIXENE.

Imprison'd, and to die!—And let him die.
Bid Dymas' daughter weep—I half forgot
His perjur'd insolence.—I'll go and glut
My vengeance. O how just a traitor's death!
And blacker still, a traitor to my love.

[*Exeunt* Erixene *and* Delia.

Scene draws, and shews Demetrius *in prison.*

DEMETRIUS.

Thou subterranean sepulchre of peace;
Thou home of horror! hideous nest of crimes!
Guilt's first sad stage in her dark road to hell!
Ye thick barr'd sunless passages for air,
To keep alive the wretch that longs to die!
Ye low-brow'd arches, through whose sullen gloom
Resound the ceaseless groans of pale despair!
Ye dreadful shambles, cak'd with human blood!
Receive a guest, from far, far other scenes,
From pompous courts, from shouting victories,
Carousing festivals, harmonious bowers,
And the soft chains of heart-dissolving love.
Oh! how unlike to these? heart-breaking load
Of shame eternal, ne'er to be knock'd off,

O welcome death, no, never but by thee—
Nor has a foe done this.—A friend! A father!—
O that I could have died without their guilt.

[*Enter* Erixene. Demetrius *gazing at her.*

So look'd in chaos the first beam of light;
How drives the strong enchantment of her eye
All horror hence!—How die the thoughts of death!

ERIXENE.

I knew not my own heart. I cannot bear it.
Shame chides me back; for to insult his woes
Is too severe; and to condole, too kind. [*Going.*

DEMETRIUS.

Thus I arrest you in the name of mercy,
And dare compel your stay: Is then one look,
One word, one moment, a last moment too,
When I stand tottering on the brink of death,
A cruel ignominious death, too much
For one that loves like me? A length of years
You may devote to my blest rival's arms;
I ask but one short moment. O permit,
Permit the dying to lay claim to thee,
To thee, thou dear equivalent for life——
Cruel, relentless, marble-hearted maid!

ERIXENE.

Demetrius, you persist to do me wrong;
For, know, though I behold thee as thou art,
Doubly a traitor to the state and me;
Thy sorrow, thy distress, have touch'd my bosom:
I own it is a fault; I pity thee.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My lord, your time is short, and death waits for you.

ERIXENE.

Death!—I forgive thee from my inmost soul.

DEMETRIUS.

Fogive me? Oh! thou need'st not to forgive,
If imposition had not struck thee blind.
Truth lies in ambush yet, but will start up,
And seize thy trembling soul, when mine is fled.
O I've a thousand, thousand things to say.

ERIXENE.

And I am come a secret to disclose,
That might awake thee, wert thou dead already.

OFFICER.

My lord, your final moment is expir'd.

DEMETRIUS and ERIXENE.

One, one short moment more.

DEMETRIUS.

No; death lets fall
The curtain, and divides our loves for ever.
[*Is forced out.*

ERIXENE.

Oh! I've a darker dungeon in my soul,
Nor want an executioner to kill me.
What revolutions in the human heart
Will pity cause! What horrid deeds revenge! [*Exit.*

Scene shuts. Enter ANTIGONUS, *with attendants.*

ANTIGONUS.

How distant virtue dwells from mortal man!
Was't not that each man calls for others' virtue,

Her very name on earth would be forgot,
And leave the tongue, as it hath left the heart.
Was ever such a labour'd plan of guilt?
Take the king's mandate, to the prison fly,
Throw wide the gates, and let Demetrius know
The full detail.

[*Enter* Erixene.

The princess! ha! be gone; [*To the attendant.*
While I stir up an equal transport here.
Princess, I see your griefs, and judge the cause:
But I bring news might raise you from your grave;
Or call you down from heaven to hear with joy.
Just gods! the virtuous will at last prevail.
On motives here too tedious to relate,
I begg'd the king to re-examine those
Who came from Rome. The king approv'd my counsel.
Surpris'd, and conscious, in their charge they falter'd;
And threaten'd tortures soon discover'd all:
That Perseus brib'd them to their perjuries;
That Quintius' letter was a forgery;
That prince Demetrius' intercourse with Rome,
Was innocent of treason to the state.

ERIXENE.

O my swoln heart! What will the gods do with me?

ANTIGONUS.

And to confirm this most surprising news,
Dymas, who, striving to suppress a tumult,
The rumour of Demetrius' flight had rais'd,
Was wounded sore, with his last breath confess'd,

The prince refus'd his daughter; which affront
Inflam'd the statesman to his prince's ruin.

ERIXENE.

Did he refuse her? [*Swoons.*

ANTIGONUS.

Quite o'ercome with joy!
Transported out of life!—The gods restore!

ERIXENE.

Ah! why recall me? This is a new kind
Of murder; most severe! that dooms to life.

ANTIGONUS.

Fair princess, you confound me.

ERIXENE.

Am I fair?
Am I a princess? love and empire mine?
Gay, gorgeous visions dancing in my sight!
No, here I stand a naked shipwreck'd wretch,
Cold, trembling, pale, spent, helpless, hopeless, maid;
Cast on a shore as cruel as the waves,
O'erhung with rugged rocks, too steep to climb;
The mountain billows loud, come foaming in
Tremendous; and confound, ere they devour.

ANTIGONUS.

Madam, the king absolves you from your vow.

ERIXENE.

For me, it matters not; but oh! the prince——
When he had shot the gulf of his despair;
Emerging into all the light of heaven,
His heart high-beating with well-grounded hope;

Then to make shipwreck of his happiness,
Like a poor wretch that has escap'd the storm,
And swam to what he deems a happy isle,
When, lo! the savage natives drink his blood.
Ah! why is vengeance sweet to woman's pride,
As rapture to her love? It has undone me.

DELIA.

Madam, he comes.

ERIXENE.

Leave us, Antigonus.

ANTIGONUS.

What dreadful secret this?—But I 'll obey,
Invoke the gods, and leave the rest to fate.

[*Exit* Antig.

ERIXENE.

How terribly triumphant comes the wretch!
He comes, like flowers ambrosial, early born,
To meet the blast, and perish in the storm.

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS.

After an age of absence in one hour,
Have I then found thee, thou celestial maid!
Like a fair Venus in a stormy sea;
Or a bright goddess, through the shades of night,
Dropp'd from the stars to these bless'd arms again?
How exquisite is pleasure after pain!
Why throbs my heart so turbulently strong,
Pain'd at thy presence, through redundant joy,

Like a poor miser, beggar'd by his store?

ERIXENE.

Demetrius, joy and sorrow dwell too near.

DEMETRIUS.

Talk not of sorrow, lest the gods resent
As under-priz'd so loud a call to joy.
I live, I love, am lov'd, I have her here!
Rapture, in present, and in prospect, more!
No rival, no destroyer, no despair;
For jealousies, for partings, groans, and death,
A train of joys, the gods alone can name!
When heaven descends in blessings so profuse,
So sudden, so surpassing hope's extreme,
Like the sun bursting from the midnight gloom,
'Tis impious to be niggards in delight;
Joy becomes duty; Heaven calls for some excess,
And transport flames as incense to the skies.

ERIXENE.

Transport how dreadful!

DEMETRIUS.

Turns Erixene?
Can she not bear the sunshine of our fate?
Meridian happiness is pour'd around us;
The laughing loves descend in swarms upon us;
And where we tread is an eternal spring.
By heaven, I almost pity guilty Perseus
For such a loss.

ERIXENE.

That stabs me through and through!

DEMETRIUS.

What stabs thee?—Speak.—Have I then lost thy love?

ERIXENE.

To my confusion, be it spoke—'Tis thine.

DEMETRIUS.

To thy confusion! Is it then a crime?
You heard how dying Dymas clear'd my fame.

ERIXENE.

I heard, and trembled; heard, and ran distracted.

DEMETRIUS.

Astonishment!

ERIXENE.

I've nothing else to give thee.

[*He steps back in astonishment; she in agony; and both are silent for some time.*

He is struck dumb.—Nor can I speak.—Yet must I.
I tremble on the brink: yet must plunge in——
Know, my Demetrius! joys are for the gods;
Man's common course of nature is distress:
His joys are prodigies; and, like them, too,
Portend approaching ill. The wise man starts,
And trembles at the perils of a bliss.
To hope, how bold! How daring to be fond,
When what our fondness grasps is not immortal!
I will presume on thy known, steady virtue,
And treat thee like a man; I will, Demetrius!
Nor longer in my bosom hide a brand,
That burns unseen, and drinks my vital blood.

DEMETRIUS.

What mystery? [*Here a second pause in both.*

ERIXENE.

The blackest.

DEMETRIUS.

How every terror doubles in the dark!
Why muffled up in silence stands my fate?
This horrid spectre let me see at once,
And shew if I 'm a man.

ERIXENE.

It calls for more.

DEMETRIUS.

It calls for me then; love has made me more.

ERIXENE.

O fortify thy soul with more than love;
To hear, what heard, thou 'lt curse the tongue that tells thee.

DEMETRIUS.

Curse whom? Curse thee!

ERIXENE.

Yes, from thy inmost soul.
Why dost thou lift thy eyes and hands to heaven?
The powers most conscious of this deed, reside
In darkness, howl below in raging fires,
Where pangs like mine corrode them.—Thence arise,
Black gods of execration and despair!
Tho' dreadful earthquakes cleave your upward way,
While nature shakes, and vapours blot the sun;
Then through those horrors in loud groans proclaim,
That I am——

DEMETRIUS.

What?—I 'll have it, though it blast me.

ERIXENE.

Thus then in thunder——I am Perseus' wife!

[*Demetrius falls against the scene. After a pause,*

DEMETRIUS.

In thunder?—No; that had not struck so deep.
What tempest e'er discharg'd so fierce a fire?—
Calm and deliberate anguish feeds upon me;
Each thought sent out for help brings in new woe.
Where shall I turn? where fly? to whom but thee?
[*Kneeling.*
Tremendous Jove! whom mortals will not know
From blessings, but compel to be severe,
I feel thy vengeance, and adore thy power;
I see my failings, and absolve thy rage.
But, oh! I must perceive the load that 's on me;
I can't but tremble underneath the stroke.
Aid me to bear!—But since it can't be borne,
Oh let thy mercy burst in flames upon me;
Thy triple bolt is healing balm to this;
This pain unfelt, unfancy'd by the wretch,
The groaning wretch that on the wheel expires.

ERIXENE.

Why did I tell thee?

DEMETRIUS.

Why commit a deed
Too shocking to be told? What fumes of hell
Flew to thy brain? What fiend the crime inspir'd?

ERIXENE.

Perseus, last night, as soon as thou wast fled,

At that dead hour, when good men are at rest,
When every crime and horror is abroad,
Graves yawn, fiends yell, wolves howl, and ravens scream;
Than ravens, wolves, or fiends, more fatal far,
To me he came, and threw him at my feet,
And wept, and swore, unless I gave consent
To call a priest that moment, *all was ruin'd.*
That the next day Demetrius and his powers
Might conquer, he lose me, and I my crown
Conferr'd by Philip but on Perseus' wife.
I started, trembled, fainted; he invades
My half-recover'd strength, brib'd priests conspire,
All urge my vow, all seize my ravish'd hand,
Invoke the gods, run o'er the hasty rite;
While each ill omen of the sky flew o'er us,
And furies howl'd our nuptial song below.——
Canst thou forgive?

DEMETRIUS.

By all the flames of love,
And torments of despair, I never can.
The furies toss their torches from thy hand,
And all their adders hiss around thy head!
I'll see thy face no more! [*Going.*

ERIXENE.

Thy rage is just.
Yet stay, and hear me. [*She kneels, and holds him.*

DEMETRIUS.

I have heard too much.

ERIXENE.

Till thou hast heard the whole, O do not curse me!

DEMETRIUS.

Where can I find a curse to reach thy crime?

ERIXENE.

Mercy! [*Weeping.*

DEMETRIUS. [*aside.*]

Her tears, like drops of molten lead,
With torment burn their passage to my heart.
And yet such violation of her vows——

ERIXENE.

Mercy!

DEMETRIUS.

Perseus— [*Stamping.*

ERIXENE.

Stamp till the centre shakes,
So black a dæmon shalt thou never raise.
Perseus! Canst thou abhor him more than I?
Hell has its furies, Perseus has his love,
And, oh! Demetrius his eternal hate.

DEMETRIUS.

Eternal! Yes, eternal and eternal;
As deep, and everlasting, as my pain.

ERIXENE.

Some god descend, and sooth his soul to peace!

DEMETRIUS.

Talk'st thou of peace? What peace hast thou bestow'd?
A brain distracted, and a broken heart.
Talk'st thou of peace? Hark, hark, thy husband calls,

His father's rebel! brother's murderer!
Nature's abhorrence! and—thy lawful lord!
Fly, my kind patroness, and in his bosom
Consult my peace.

ERIXENE.

I never shall be there.
My lord! my life!

DEMETRIUS.

How say'st? Is Perseus here?—
Fly, fly! away, away! 'tis death! 'tis incest!
[*Starting wide, and looking round him. As he is going, she lays hold of his robe.*
Dar'st thou to touch Demetrius? Dar'st thou touch him
E'en with thine eye?

ERIXENE.

I dare—and more, dare seize,
And fix him here: No doubt to thy surprise.—
I 'm blemish'd, not abandon'd; honour still
Is sacred in my sight. Thou call'st it incest;
'Tis innocence, 'tis virtue; if there 's virtue
In fix'd, inviolable strength of love.
For, know, the moment the dark deed was done,
The moment madness made me Perseus' wife,
I seiz'd this friend, and lodg'd him in my bosom.
[*Shewing a dagger.*
Firmly resolv'd I never would be more.
And now I fling me at thy feet, imploring
Thy steadier hand to guide him to my heart.

Who wed in vengeance, wed not but to die.

DEMETRIUS.

Has Perseus then an hymeneal claim?
And no divorce but death?—and death from me,
Who should defend thee from the world in arms?
O thou still excellent! still most belov'd!

ERIXENE.

Life is the foe that parts us; death, a friend
All knots dissolving, joins us; and for ever.
Why so disorder'd? Wherefore shakes thy frame?
Look on me; do I tremble? Am I pale?
When I let loose a sigh, I 'll pardon thine.
Take my example, and be bravely wretched;
True grandeur rises from surmounted ills;
The wretched only can be truly great.
If not in kindness, yet in vengeance strike;
'Tis not Erixene, 'tis Perseus' wife.——
Thou 'lt not resign me?

DEMETRIUS.

Not to Jove.

ERIXENE.

Then strike.

DEMETRIUS. [*gazing on her with astonishment.*]
How can I strike? Stab at the face of heaven?
How can I strike?—Yet how can I forbear?
I feel a thousand deaths, debating one.
A deity stands guard on every charm,
And strikes at me.

ERIXENE.

As will thy brother soon:

He's now in arms, and may be here this hour.
Nothing so cruel as too soft a soul;
This is strange tenderness, that breaks my heart;
Strange tenderness, that dooms to double death——
To Perseus.

DEMETRIUS.

True.—But how to shun that horror?
By wounding thee, whom savage pards would spare?
My heart's inhabitant! my soul's ambition!
By wounding thee, and bathing in thy blood;
That blood illustrious, through a radiant race
Of kings and heroes, rolling down from gods?

ERIXENE.

Heroes and kings, and gods themselves, must yield
To dire necessity.

DEMETRIUS.

Since that absolves me,
Stand firm and fair.

ERIXENE.

My bosom meets the point,
Than Perseus far more welcome to my breast.

DEMETRIUS.

Necessity, for gods themselves too strong,
Is weaker than thy charms. [*Drops the dagger.*

ERIXENE.

O my Demetrius!
[*Turns, and goes to the farther part of the stage.*

DEMETRIUS.

O my Erixene! [*Both silent, weep, and tremble.*

ERIXENE.

Farewell. [*Going.*

DEMETRIUS. [*passionately seizing her.*]

Where goest?

ERIXENE.

To seek a friend.

DEMETRIUS.

He 's here.

ERIXENE.

Yes, Perseus' friend.——

Earth, open and receive me.

DEMETRIUS.

Heaven strike us dead,

And save me from a double suicide,

And one of tenfold death.—O Jove! O Jove!

[*Falling on his knees.*

But I 'm distracted. [*Suddenly starting up.*

What can Jove? Why pray?

What can I pray for?

ERIXENE.

For a heart.

DEMETRIUS.

Yes, one

That cannot feel. Mine bleeds at every vein.

Who never lov'd, ne'er suffer'd; he feels nothing,

Who nothing feels but for himself alone;

And when we feel for others, reason reels,

O'erloaded, from her path, and man runs mad.

As love alone can exquisitely bless,

Love only feels that marvellous of pain,

Opens new veins of torture in the soul,
And wakes the nerve where agonies are born:
E'en Dymas, Perseus (hearts of adamant!)
Might weep these torments of their mortal foe.

ERIXENE.

Shall I be less compassionate than they?
[*Takes up the dagger.*
What love denied, thine agonies have done;
[*Stabs herself.*
Demetrius' sigh outstings the dart of death.

Enter the KING, *&c.*

KING.

Give me Demetrius to my arms; I call him
To life from death, to transport from despair.

DEMETRIUS.

See, Perseus' wife! [*pointing at* Erixene.] Let Delia tell the rest.

KING.

My grief-accustom'd heart can guess too well.

DEMETRIUS.

That sight turns all to guilt, but tears and death.

KING.

Death!—Who shall quell false Perseus now in arms?
Who pour my tempest on the Capitol?
How shall I sweeten life to thy sad spirit?—
I'll quit my throne this hour, and thou shalt reign.

DEMETRIUS.

You recommend that death you would dissuade;
Ennobled thus by fame and empire lost,

As well as life!—Small sacrifice to love.

[*Going to stab himself, the* King *runs to prevent it; but too late.*

KING.

Ah, hold! nor strike thy dagger through my heart!

DEMETRIUS.

'Tis my first disobedience, and my last. [*Falls down.*

KING.

There Philip fell! There Macedon expir'd!
I see the Roman eagle hovering o'er us,
And the shaft broke should bring her to the ground.
[*Pointing at* Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS.

Hear, good Antigonus! my last request:
Tell Perseus, if he 'll sheath his impious sword
Drawn on his father, I 'll forgive him all;
Though poor Erixene lies bleeding by:
Her blood cries Vengeance; but my father's, Peace—
[*Dies.*

KING.

As much his goodness wounds me as his death.
What then are both?—O Philip, once renown'd!
Where is the pride of Greece, the dread of Rome,
The theme of Athens, the wide world's example,
And the god Alexander's rival, now?
E'en at the foot of fortune's precipice,
Where the slave's sigh wafts pity to the prince,
And his omnipotence cries out for more.

ANTIGONUS.

As the swoln column of ascending smoke,
So solid swells thy grandeur, pigmy man!

KING.

My life's deep tragedy was plann'd with art,
From scene to scene advancing in distress,
Through a sad series, to this dire result;
As if the Thracian queen conducted all,
And wrote the moral in her children's blood;
Which seas might labour to wash out in vain.
Hear it, ye nations! distant ages! hear;
And learn the dread decrees of Jove to fear:
His dread decrees the strictest balance keep;
The father groans, who made a mother weep.
But if no terror for yourselves can move,
Tremble, ye parents, for the child ye love;
For your Demetrius: Mine is doom'd to bleed,
A guiltless victim, for his father's deed.

[*Exeunt.*

AN

HISTORICAL EPILOGUE,

BY THE AUTHOR.

AN epilogue, through custom, is your right,
But ne'er perhaps was needful till this night:
To-night the virtuous falls, the guilty flies,
Guilt's dreadful close our narrow scene denies.
In history's authentic record read
What ample vengeance gluts Demetrius' shade;
Vengeance so great, that when his tale is told,
With pity some e'en Perseus may behold.
Perseus surviv'd, indeed, and fill'd the throne:
But ceaseless cares in conquest made him groan:
Nor reign'd he long; from Rome swift thunder flew,
And headlong from his throne the tyrant threw:
Thrown headlong down, by Rome in triumph led,
For this night's deed his perjur'd bosom bled:
His brother's ghost each moment made him start,
And all his father's anguish rent his heart.
When, rob'd in black, his children round him hung,
And their rais'd arms in early sorrow wrung;
The younger smil'd, unconscious of their woe;
At which thy tears, O Rome! began to flow;
So sad the scene: What then must Perseus feel,
To see Jove's race attend the victor's wheel;
To see the slaves of his worst foes increase,
From such a source!—an emperor's embrace;

He sicken'd soon to death; and, what is worse,
He well deserv'd, and felt the coward's curse;
Unpity'd, scorn'd, insulted his last hour,
Far, far from home, and in a vassal's power;
His pale cheek rested on his shameful chain,
No friend to mourn, no flatterer to feign;
No suit retards, no comfort sooths his doom,
And not one tear bedews a monarch's tomb.
Nor ends it thus—dire vengeance to complete,
His ancient empire falling shares his fate:
His throne forgot! his weeping country chain'd!
And nations ask—where Alexander reign'd.
As public woes a prince's crime pursue,
So public blessings are his virtue's due:
Shout, Britons, shout—auspicious fortune bless!
And cry, Long live—our title to success!

THE

CENTAUR NOT FABULOUS:

IN

SIX LETTERS TO A FRIEND,

ON THE

LIFE IN VOGUE.

Doth he not speak parables? *Ezek.*

Letter
I. On Infidelity.
II. On Pleasure.
III. On Pleasure; in answer to one received.
IV. On Pleasure.
V. Life's Review.
VI. The Dignity of Man.
The Centaur's Restoration to Humanity.
The Dignity of Man resumed.
The Conclusion.

TO THE

LADY *****.

MADAM,

YOUR ladyship's character is so well known, that the public would blame me if I presented not these papers to you, who can so readily put them into the hands of those who want them most.

You will probably ask, why 'The Centaur' is prefixed as a title to them. The men of pleasure, the licentious and profligate, are the subject of these letters; and in such, as in the fabled Centaur, the brute runs away with the man; therefore I call them Centaurs. And farther, I call them Centaurs not fabulous, because, by their scarce half-human conduct and character, that ænigmatical and purely ideal figure of the ancients is not unriddled only, but realized.

Your ladyship's curiosity is great; and you possibly are willing to know what account antiquity gives of the family, or rather breed, of the Centaurs. It is as follows.

Of the Centaurs the most celebrated was Chiron. He was a great botanist; and our bitter herb centaury takes its name from him. He thought all herbs bitter, because, being very amorous, he could not find any amongst them that could abate the fever in his blood: and he left a complaint in the Greek language to that purpose; which Ovid, sick of the same disease, has translated, and transmitted to posterity in his works.

But he was not only a botanist, but a great master of music: he

composed an exquisite piece of harmony for young Achilles his pupil, which charmed Deidamia to his embraces; by whom he had Pyrrhus, in the court of her father Nicomedes, a little before he dropped his petticoats, and put on his boots for the Trojan war. But what will endear to your ladyship Chiron's memory beyond any the most renowned in story is, that he was not only the venerable father of Operas, but was also the son of a Masquerade; the very first of those numerous sons, with which that public entertainment has since multiplied mankind.

It happened thus: Saturn, false to his good wife Ops, had an intrigue with Phillyra. Seeing, one day, his injured spouse coming to disturb their intimacy, for escape, he turned himself into a horse; which occasioned the noble equestrian figure of Chiron, his son.

This, madam, was the very first of masquerades. You see the *virtuous* occasion, and the *laudable* fruits of it. Jupiter's masquerading in the form of a bull was long after. Europe takes its name from Europa, with whom he ran away in that shape. And your friend Clodius says, that, probably, we celebrate horned masquerades in memory of it. This is the recorded origin of that nocturnal assembly; and, indeed, it is evident to common sense, that the masquerade had never existed, but for its then accidental, and since established, subserviency to love.

These, you will say, are wild fables: but they are not without their morals. This fable of Saturn and Ops, means, that, jealous Conscience, the soul's lawful wife, will ever disturb licentious pleasure; and that there is no means of escaping the persecution, but by becoming quite brutal in it. This and the following explanations of the mystical part of antiquity have been overlooked by former commentators, though Bacon was among them.

There is a second moral in the present fable. Chiron, madam, was a man; as much, I mean, as the gayer part of your acquaintance. Why then is he represented as a Centaur?—For two reasons. He was, as I have said before, the son of Saturn; and a

very lewd old fellow. Representing him as a Centaur signifies, that beings of origin truly celestial may debase their nature, forfeit their character, and sink themselves, by licentiousness, into perfect beasts.

Secondly, it signifies, that the rest of the species, the sober part of mankind, prejudiced by the abandoned manners of such men, may naturally imagine that they hear them neighing after their wives and daughters; galloping with more than human haste after temptations; and, therefore, rather insolently prancing on four legs, than decently content with two. This, probably, is the meaning; first, because prejudice greatly hurts our discernment, and transforms objects exceedingly. Secondly, because all allow that a Centaur is a mere creature of the imagination.

But though Chiron was the most celebrated, yet he was not the most ancient, of our mythological cavalry. Ixion was a primitive man of pleasure; a gallant of Juno, and much in favour. Jupiter, less in his interest, interposed a cloud in her stead, which not long after was brought to bed of the first Centaurs. From that hour Juno commenced a scold: and in that character Virgil makes her swear, that if she cannot find friends in heaven, she will ransack hell for them.

The amour of Ixion imports the great height of our expectation, and as great depth of our disappointment, in illicit love. And Jupiter's interposing the cloud, intimates, that Heaven decrees this disappointment; and that therefore it is madness to flatter ourselves with hopes of the contrary. The fable would farther teach us, that our imagination, fired by passion, imposes not only on our understandings, but our very senses; which take clouds for goddesses, and adore darkness as divine.

You see, madam, that gallantry is hereditary in this illustrious house, I should say *stable:* that therefore continence may be construed as an argument of bastardy. Who then can blame your gay friends for being loath to be bastardized, and disinherited; to lose honour, patrimony, and mistress, together?

They keep clear of this imputation: but there is one particular, that speaks not so much in their favour; but rather calls their legitimacy in question. How comes it to pass that the posterity of cloud-begotten sires should be so cloudless a generation, that not one spot of stupidity can be found about them?

But though spotless in this point, they are not so in another; which may set all right again. Deianira, as a charm to regain the love of her husband Hercules, who was gone astray after Omphale, queen of Lydia, sent him a shirt dipped in the blood of the Centaur Nessus. But instead of answering her honest end, it gave him a distemper so virulent, that it proved mortal. To balance the disadvantage above, some say, this distemper, at certain seasons, still runs in his race. Others rob our modern Centaurs of that credit; imputing their disorder to another cause. And, indeed, the present story tells us, that ladies may convey somewhat else, when they mean only to make a present of their love.

But worse than distemper is to be feared. You know, madam, Ixion's remarkable punishment; but probably not the full import of it. Jupiter, for the father's sake detesting his whole posterity, designed Ixion's wheel, not only as an emblem of their endless rotation in unaltered circles of present pleasures; but also as a prophecy of their future pains, and an exact representation of that rack which, prudes say, they deserve for their family feats.

And now, madam, all things considered, have I named them wrong? I have named them, as most men of ancient renown were, from their personal qualities and exploits. If you still think me to blame, I flatter myself you will change your mind, when you have read the letters following.

This address to your ladyship, will my sober reader say, is itself a Centaur of the Pegasean kind, in which the untamed imagination has too much run away with the judgment, and carried it to enormous heights. If your ladyship will venture, however, to be my fellow-traveller, I promise to carry you safely to an eminence in Fairy-land, from whence you shall survey the most

surprising and amusing scene. To comply with your taste, it shall even be a ludicrous one. Your favourite Centaurs shall be permitted to intrude even into the most solemn groves of sacred meditation. Their grotesque figures shall continually meet your eye, where you the least expect, and where the severest critic and the prude (all but Centauresses are prudes with you) will be most scandalized to find them.

As a pledge of this promise, accept of my frontispiece. It offers a sketch which your ladyship, who know our Centaurs' secret accomplishments better than I do, may employ a better hand to perfect.

The statues of the renowned are set up in public, to kindle honest emulation. In most ancient schools of wisdom were the busts or portraits of the wise. What, madam, if, for your modern academy, Hogarth should draw a Centaur, not, as usual, with his bow and arrow, but (what will hit my mark as well) with Harlequin's sabre by his side; in a party-coloured jacket of pictured cards; a band of music before, a Scaramouch-demon behind him; a weathercock on his head, a rattle in his hand, the decalogue under his feet; and, for the benefit of your scholars, a label out of his mouth, inscribed, as was the temple of Apollo, with Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν, in letters of gold [In MF. Know thyself]: they, your scholars, will take it in the true philosophic sense, and wonder how it came into the mouth of so ridiculous, and, to them, so foreign, a monster.

As your ladyship's assembly, of all our hippodromes is the most renowned, I hope you will favourably accept the wholesome provender I send you. It is of an anticircean nature; and may, possibly, turn your monsters into men.

But I detain you: it is Sunday night: and I hear a whole string of your high-bred unbridled colts coming in full career; with a blaze in their foreheads, to outbrazen my rebukes; and a spring in their heels, to bound high at your balls.

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.

This, madam, you understand better than they. But you begin to frown, as you always do at praise. Fear not; not one word of compliment shall you have from me during our whole journey. I shall carry you at first a heavy trot through rough unbeaten ways, entertaining you unpolitely, with discourse quite foreign to your way of thinking; such as passed in correspondence between me and a friend, that would equally despise, and be despised, among such as you think yours. In the progress of our travels (which, I must honestly tell you, will only touch upon, not terminate in, Fairy-land) I shall carry you into an unknown country, where every thing is real, bright, and transporting. If there, compelled by the force of sovereign truth, I should not only assert, but convincingly prove, that you are of rank more than imperial, and present you with an unflattering glass, in which, notwithstanding, your own form shall appear with all the charms of an angel ——But some breathing-time is necessary to prepare for such an arduous expedition. Therefore, I dismount for the present, and say no more.

I am,

MADAM, &c.

THE

CENTAUR NOT FABULOUS.

LETTER I.

ON INFIDELITY.

DEAR SIR,

MAKE no apology for your request; the world is your apology. The occasion calls louder on me than my friend can possibly do; and robs me of the credit of having my compliance owing entirely to your desire. Alarmed at our reigning passion for pleasure, you press me to write on that subject. Who can forbear? since, if the present canine appetite for it should increase, where is that Bedlam which can receive a whole nation into proper methods of cure?

Your enjoining me one task has engaged me in two. Prevails not infidelity as much as pleasure? And for ever they must prevail or decrease together. Infidelity is the parent of the love of pleasure in some: Eve doubted, and then ate. It is the consequence of it in others: most of Eve's daughters first

taste, and then disbelieve. Pleasure and infidelity reciprocally generate each other; and that necessarily. For faith is entirely the result of reason; and reason is impotent in proportion to the prevalence of sense; therefore sensual pleasure begets infidelity. On the reverse, he that disbelieves a futurity must be fond of the present, and eagerly swallow its unrivaled delights; and therefore infidelity lets loose the rein to pleasure, and gives it an ample range. He, then, who would reduce one, must strike at both. Eve and the serpent fell together: pleasure, like the first, plucks the forbidden fruit; and infidelity says, with the latter, "Thou shalt not surely die."

These two, now national distempers, fairly divide us between them. One seizes the body; one, the mind: and where these two fiery darts have taken place, the destroyer may spare a third: his work is done. What then must be mine? The task is hard to extract them; for they seem, at present, to be not only poisoned, but barbed, arrows, in the British heart.

However, I shall attempt, first, to make the infidel, and, then, the voluptuary, sensible of his error. I shall recommend belief and virtue, in the room of doubt and dissoluteness; and by (I hope) properly adapted devotion, assist their repentance; that necessary step of transition from one of these states to the other. And considering into whose hands these letters will *first* come (for I design them for the press), with regard to yourself, I shall give you your friend Eusebius's character at large. And with regard to your

sister, I shall invite her and her gay favourites to a funeral, instead of a ball; and, then, I shall enter on subjects not unimportant, nor foreign to these.

As the mind is our superior part, I shall first speak of infidelity, and then of pleasure. And it shall be my endeavour so to speak of both, as to render it the province of wit, rather than wisdom, to reply. What may silence wisdom will but provoke wit, whose ambition it is to say most where least is to be said. You may as well attempt to silence an echo by the strength of voice, as a wit by the force of reason. They both are but the louder for it: they both will have the last word. How often hear we men with great ingenuity supporting folly? that is, by wit destroying wisdom; as the same sort of men by pleasure destroy happiness; prone to draw evil out of good, and set things at variance, which, by nature, are allies. Happiness and pleasure, as wisdom and wit, are each other's friends or foes; and if foes, of foes the worst. Well chosen pleasure is a branch of happiness; well judging wit is a flower of wisdom: but when these petty subalterns set up for themselves, and counteract their principals, one makes a greater wretch, and the other a grosser fool, than could exist without them. Pleasure then calls for our compassion, and wit for our contempt. Of how many might the names have slept in safety, had not their unlucky parts awakened a just clamour against them?

Have we not a recent and signal instance, how far wit can set wisdom at defiance, and, with its artful

brilliances, dazzle common understandings? That noble author * smiles at a certain text, of which I shall make a serious use, viz. "When the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, they begot giants." So when great talents fall in love with mean purposes, they beget errors of an enormous size, both in opinion and in life. What more enormous than to let infidelity gather such strength, even in our decline, as to stand the terrors of a death-bed, and bequeath proud legacies of its poison to the world? Is not this stretching out our boldness even beyond the day of trial? carrying the war into the very borders (if I may so speak) of that dread Being we dare oppose? and desperately presuming to achieve that in our grave, of which a Julian, of equal genius, though not of equal guilt, despaired on a throne; and that the greatest on earth? Julian was for defeating one prophecy; my lord is for expunging them all; and, with like success, *Vicisti, Galilæe,* may serve for both.

Take I too great a freedom? It is both folly and vice to bear any man ill-will. But it is also folly and vice not so to behave, when occasion requires, as that our conduct may be mistaken for ill-will, if the prejudiced think fit. Why should our opponents call that ill-will, which they, if they were of our opinion, and thought us in a fatal error, and heartily wished us well, would, necessarily, do out of perfect love? If the viscount's admirers resent out of zeal to his honour, I assure them, (though I have had no apparition,) that

* Lord Bolingbroke.

his lordship, now on my side, thanks them not for the favour.

Time was, when those errors into which he fell would have been more excusable. For, that truth was obscure, and falsehood specious, and opinions endless; and that in these circumstances the mind of man could find no rest, because suspense is anxious, and assent almost inevitably betrayed into mistake;—this was the sad and just complaint of the heathen world, which by God's dereliction had lost its way, and could not regain it by the feeble glimmering of natural light.

But of what have *we* to complain, who grope, and wander, and stumble, at noon-day? Ours is not ignorance, but perverseness; not want of a guide, but defection from him. Our noble author, so much admired, because so much in the wrong, declares our light to be darkness; and with the boasted acuteness of his superior understanding, instead of couching those that are blind, is for putting out the eyes of those that see. Thus Heaven's supreme blessing on us in the Gospel, is not annulled only by our perverseness, but turned to much hurt. We are favoured to our misfortune, we are enriched to our loss.

The heathens courted truth as a mistress, with warm and sincere addresses, but could not obtain her. We, having obtained her, treat her, as an abandoned age the lawful partners of their beds, with satiety, and disgust, and a wild desire after new embraces. And what have we embraced? Thus runs at best

the palatable doctrine of an age too knowing to need instruction, and too proud to bear it from heaven itself:

" Whatever notices of duty to God or man are im-
" printed in us by nature, or deduced by reason, these
" are obliging and necessary to be performed by all,
" as the natural religion: but as for any positive in-
" stitutions or particular forms of religion, these are
" of human origin, stampt in the political mints of
" craft, interest, or ambition; a coin current for the
" vulgar only." It is fit, it seems, that the vulgar should be fettered, that their superiors may expatiate more at large, and not fear to meet with rivals in them. And, indeed, if the vulgar had the same principles and opinions with many of their masters, their masters would have as fair a chance to have their throats cut, as the murderer to be hanged for it.

As to God; they say, " The natural religion com-
" mands us to think worthily, and speak reverently, of
" Him: but, as some have thought churches deroga-
" tory to the notions of an omnipresent Being; so
" formal prayers and solemn services are no way
" necessary to a Being omniscient." They present Him (if with any) with a more sublime and philosophical devotion, stripped of all externals, invisible as the Deity himself, and, indeed, as incomprehensible to the multitude; whose religion, like themselves, must have a body as well as a soul, or it will evaporate into nothing. Thus, under pretence of a compliment to one divine attribute, they rob all of the worship due

to them. They pretend to give God exalted homage, as the Jews arrayed our blessed Lord in a purple robe, to mock him, not adore. And here our undissembled neglect, if not contempt, of religion, and our barefaced venality setting all, even souls, to sale, cannot but recall to mind, that these sister iniquities, as if naturally connected, went hand-in-hand (as the historian tells us) towards the ruin of the Roman commonwealth.

[Deos negligere, omnia venalia habere. SALLUST.

As to the duties of the second table, they tell us, that "the precepts of nature run evidently against injuries "and injustice: We must by no means commit rapine, "or murder; these are unsociable crimes: but as for "any pleasurable enjoyments of ourselves, why de-"prive ourselves of these? why starve at a feast Hea-"ven sets before us? We cannot conceive God to be "a tyrant: to what end has he given desires, but that "we should satisfy them! or appetites, but that we "should indulge them? Anger and lust, if constitu-"tional, are venial sins."

Thus the sluices are set open for all sensuality, promiscuous incontinence, and studied arts of excess, to pour in uncontrolled: and by a second compliment to the Deity, as sincere as my lord's pretended regard for Christianity, is varnished over a second violation of his laws. Bacchus and Venus are recalled to a new apotheosis under a Christian æra, and receive daily sacrifice in the fortunes, health, and common dignity of man. What voluntary victims are we? And as

victims of old were crowned with flowers, how gaily does poor devoted Britain bleed at their altars!

In answer to their pleas, it must be observed, that desires and appetites were not given us out of tyranny, but with an intention doubly kind; as a means both of pleasure and virtue, if gratified and restrained as religion directs. In both views they are blessings, but greatest in the last; yet an Esau will ever be for preferring the former.

Thus you see, sir, that both the tables of the decalogue are broken, in a more terrible sense than they were by Moses at his descent from the mount; and from no dissimilar cause. The sufficiency of human reason is the golden calf which these men set up to be worshipped; and in the phrensies of their extravagant devotion to it, they trample on venerable authority; strike at an oak with an osier; the doctrine of God's own planting, and the growth of ages, with the sudden and fortuitous shoots of imagination, abortive births of an hour. These human improvements on divine revelation, may be compared to the profaning the holy temple with the figure of heathen idols, under Antiochus Epiphanes; or rather to the proud Roman emperor, who took the head from Jupiter's statue, and placed his own in its stead. These are bold men; but the boldest, we hope, may be reclaimed. That Almighty finger which wrote the divine laws twice in stone, cannot want power to give them a new impression in their apostate hearts.

And that they may the more willingly receive that

impression, I shall observe, that, setting aside the immoral consequences of infidelity, faith is necessary on its own account, without relation to any thing else. Faith is not only a means of obeying, but a principal act of obedience. It is not only a needful foundation; it is not only as an altar, on which to sacrifice; but it is a sacrifice itself; and, perhaps, of all the greatest. It is a submission of our understandings, an oblation of our idolized reason, to God; which he requires so indispensably, that our whole will and affections, though seemingly a larger sacrifice, will not, without it, be received at our hands.

Does any question this? His lordship's disciples will be very apt to question it: yet this is true; unless we can suppose the primitive martyrs to have laid down their lives for what was unnecessary to their salvation. For it was not an attestation of their doctrine, but their faith, for which the blessed apostles were persecuted, and the martyrs shed their blood; which they might easily have avoided, if they had insisted only on the moral precepts of their new dispensation. Their moral precepts were approved, and welcomed, by the wisest on earth. Nay, our infidels compliment them, especially when they would give themselves the greater weight in their opposition to our creed; yet, possibly, they had rather subscribe that absurd creed, than stand obliged to practise that morality which they so much commend.

To renounce, or corrupt, the faith, (one or both of which is my lord's point) abstracted from libertine gra-

tifications to follow, or to get rid of fear from those past, there seems to be so little temptation, that I should think none would venture on it but through ignorance of its guilt. Its guilt therefore I have pointed out; which shews that modern deism, how laudable soever the deist's life is, is criminal in itself. A virtuous life, rising from a corrupted faith (if that could possibly be), is as an angel of light supported by a cloven foot; which many seem not to believe, otherwise they would not be so often pleading the virtue of deists, as a full absolution of that sect: whereas we are expressly told, that the "just shall live by faith;" that is, even the just shall not live, that is, be saved, without it.

But though a corrupt faith is sufficiently criminal in itself, yet its guilt rarely rests there; it often produces an irregular life. On the contrary, vicious practice is sure to produce a corrupt faith, or an absolute renunciation of all belief: for the notices of good and ill are so fairly imprinted on our nature, and the practice of them is so strongly guarded by consequent hope and fear, that no conscience is so hardened as to sin without the shelter of some pretence. The guilty hush conscience with such soft whispers as these: Either, Heaven takes not such cognizance of our actions; or, is not so much concerned about them as some imagine; or, its mercy will not suffer it to be just; or, its justice will not suffer it to be so severe, as to punish temporal guilt with eternal pain: all which are corruptions of the faith. Or if these opiates will not do,

they proceed to renounce the faith. They give themselves a quite quieting draught of absolute unbelief: a Deity is a dream, and Religion a cheat. And thus they throw off their fears, their God, and common sense, together; and are deplorably gay, till they are irremediably undone. How happy might such wretches be, if they knew what a trifle pleasure is to peace! A very trifle is it, even when pleasure is innocent: but when not, when pleasure is an enemy to peace; then, then indeed, it is a trifle no more.

There is a text which must give some surprise to those who doubt whether a bad life occasions a false or no belief. It is said, there must be heresies, that is, false beliefs. And why? There is certainly no fatal necessity for them, from God's destination—No; but there is a moral necessity for them, from man's corruption. A heart boiling with violent and vicious passions, will send up infatuating fumes to the head; and a delirious giddiness of head will make a man fall into the grossest mistakes, be his natural abilities what they will. A lewd and obstinate will fails not to blind the strongest judgment, as Delilah the man of might.

Many, even of those that hold fast the faith, may, perhaps, not have observed, that faith is doubly precious; it is our duty, and our refuge; nay, it is doubly our refuge. It rescues our passions from flaming into vice, and it rescues our understanding from darkening into errors. The same qualification which is necessary for us in order to please God, is as necessary to secure ourselves from imposture; and not only

from such impostures as others may prepare for us, but from our own. It is our sole security against our framing impositions to deceive our own judgments (as shewn above), as well as against our incurring crimes to defeat our own salvation.

As to the mysterious articles of our faith, which infidels would by no means have me forget, "Who," say they, "can swallow them?" In truth, none but those who think it no dishonour to their understandings to credit their Creator. Socinus, like our infidels, was one of a narrow throat; and, out of generous compassion to the Scriptures (which the world, it seems, had misunderstood for 1500 years), was for weeding them of their mysteries; and rendering them, in the plenitude of his infallible reason, undisgusting and palatable to all the rational part of mankind. Why should honest Jews and Turks be frighted from us by the Trinity? He was for making religion familiar and inoffensive. And so he did; and unchristian too. Those things which our hands can grasp, our understandings cannot comprehend. Why then deny to the Deity himself the privilege of being one, amidst that multitude of mysteries which he has made?

Here let me observe, what perhaps has escaped your notice, with regard to the blessed Trinity, which gives our unbelievers the greatest offence. The revelation of it is not only necessary for our understanding the foundation of Christianity, but is also, I conceive, an absolute demonstration of its truth; because it is a mystery which by nature could not possibly have en-

tered into the imagination of man; which they who most explode it confess, by their obstinate rejection of it. For why do they reject it, but on that very account? Our opponents, therefore, in some measure support us in our attachment to this supreme article of our creed, which they most condemn; and (what is somewhat remarkable in favour of our faith) support us in it by the very cause for which it is condemned by them.

Mysteries; that is, those great and hidden things of our religion, whose truth we are assured of by divine authority, but the manner of their being surpasses our understanding: such as the plurality of persons in the Divine Unity: God manifest in the flesh: the operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the believers: the spiritual presence of Christ in the eucharist: the uniting our scattered parts from the dust of death;—all which the Scriptures have expressly delivered as catholic truths. Several of these, several heretics have rejected; and the Socinians have, in a manner, rejected them all. Faith in these is more acceptable to God than faith in less abstruse articles of our religion, because it pays that honour which is due to his testimony; and the more seemingly incredible the matter is which we believe, the more respect we shew to the relater of it. This (putting in a caveat against the ridicule of infidels) may be called heroic faith, correspondent to heroic virtue, at which, out of prudence, they must smile.

This heroic faith may be more acceptable to God

(some may say); but, sure, not more useful to man. It may have a good influence on another life; but what account does this find in it? Who can shew me the moral effects of it?—From faith in these mysteries, man necessarily, and more justly, adores the incomprehensible majesty of God; and more justly and perfectly contemplates his own littleness, and disproportion of thought to those truths that are vouchsafed to his faith. Hence he heartily renders God a due honour for his testimony; and a due acknowledgment of his professed care of his church; and a due thankfulness for the mercy of his revelation. He renders a due obedience to his proper government, as a Christian; that is, the authority of the church; and a due assistance to the public peace, which is never safely built but on unity of judgment. And as to his private virtue, he keeps in due subjection the pride of understanding, that most vicious affection of the mind, which if let loose would be attended with a multitude of evils; and with one in particular, which occasions this letter. But though we could see none of these temporal advantages, yet would it be most reasonable in us to believe; unless we, who think it right to believe implicitly in those on whom our fortune depends, think it wrong to believe implicitly in Him on whom depends our salvation.

But there is, I confess, some error, on our own part, with regard to mysteries. We, perhaps, have given some small excuse for our infidels' contempt of mysteries, by more pious than prudent attempts that have

been sometimes made toward an explanation of them. A mystery explained is a mystery destroyed:—for what is a mystery, but a thing not known? But things not known may reasonably be believed: in the very strangest things there may be truth; and in things very credible, a lie*.

It is with our understandings, as with our eyes. Both have their mysteries: both have objects beyond their reach; some accidentally, some absolutely. We see not those objects that are placed in an obscure light, because there is a defect in the medium: we see not those that are vested with too much light, because there is a weakness in the sensory, unable to sustain such strong impressions. Thus it is with the objects of our understandings: some things we know not, for want of being duly informed. Salvation was a mystery to the Gentiles; but ceased so to be, when revealed by the Gospel. Other things we know not, because they exceed the measure of our comprehension. Thus, some articles of our faith are such mysteries, as by no revelation can cease to be so. They must be mysteries, while men are men; while yet unblessed with powers that are not indulged to this imperfect state. As it is bold and vain, so, perhaps, it has even been prejudicial to the truth, to labour at rational evictions of sacred mysteries; for by these means men attempt to comprehend the divine nature, by putting it under some injurious disguise; as we venture to gaze at the sun, after we have watched it into a cloud.

* Quintil. Institut. l. iv. c. 2.

God forbad images of himself, because it is impossible that any sensible representations could do otherwise than derogate from him that is invisible: nor can the diminishing imagery of our notions derogate less from him that is incomprehensible. I presume not to censure those who have made use of illustrations to the proper ends of piety: all I mean, is, that fallible ratiocination should not be made the grounds of faith, whose proper basis is infallible testimony. Nor is it longer faith than while it rests on that; for when I believe, not so much what is revealed, as what my own reason pronounces to be true; I believe not God, but myself. I assume, not obey; and give proof rather of the pride, than humiliation, of my reason; whereas its humiliation is a principal end aimed at by God's so strict demand of our faith.

And, indeed, far from humiliation, and even common modesty, must he be, who hopes to give light to those mysteries which St. Paul, with all his learning, eloquence, and inspiration, pronounced to be to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, those most subtle of men, foolishness: that is, they thought it folly to believe them, because unintelligible; and because they did not apprehend that there was any divine authority to compel their belief. And such Greeks have we; Epicurean Greeks, sensual, subtle, and unbelieving; and whose celebrated writings are of equal authority with

Quicquid Grecia mendax
Audet in historia. Juv.

Men, who reject divine assistance as too officious,

with a sort of disdain, as if it affronted their own abilities; and whose presumptuous opinions are industriously spread, by pest-men, through the land.

With the gross and horrid effects of such opinions and their consequences, the distempered age groans, and kingdoms shake, and judgments threaten. And well they may. How many private families have their infamous secrets? how many public transactions their barefaced iniquity? High courts of justice have their *jus datum sceleri*, and blush not to plead precedent for the violation of their own laws, and the corruption of the times for more corruption still. Is not this heaping mountain upon mountain against Heaven? And think we Heaven will never return the blow!

We have had already, nay now have, some light and merciful admonitions from Heaven. But can it be thought, that an age of judgments and pastimes; of riots and distresses; of excessive debts and excessive expence; of public poverty and private accumulation; of new sects in religion and new sallies in sin; and every other contradiction to common sense, does not call for more? I, sir, am fastened in the country; nor know I much of that larger and fouler sink of debauchery in which you breathe. But even here, I know too much. Where is that village that has not its suicides of intemperance; or its bold adventurers for still quicker death from the hand of public justice? And, to confirm that opinion above advanced,—of the close tie and mutual growth of vice and unbelief,—almost every cottage can afford us one that has cor-

rupted, and every palace one that has renounced, the faith.

I know, sir, you will tell me, that it is the business of our common piety, to deplore; of our prayers, to obstruct; and of our lives, rather than our harangues, to confute them. True: for if our Christianity is to be found no where but in our books, the Christian and infidel may drop their dispute. A Tillotson and a Bolingbroke are on the same side: their contest is but verbal, their agreement is essential, and their association will prove eternal.

But, sir, it is our duty to speak and write (if we can), as well as live, against the enemies of our Christian faith. I proceed therefore to observe, that the viscount's arguments against the authority of the Scriptures have been long since answered. But he is not without precedent in this point. This repetition of already-refuted arguments seems to be a deistical privilege, or distemper, from which few of them are free. Even echoes of echoes are to be found amongst them; which evidently shews that they write not to discover truth, but to spread infection; which old poison readministered will do, as well as new; and it will be struck deeper into the constitution, by repeating the same dose. Besides, new writers will have new readers. The book may fall into hands untainted before; or, the already infected may swallow it more greedily in a new vehicle; or, they that were disgusted with it in one vehicle, may relish it in another. I therefore ask pardon: what I miscalled distemper, I find,

on second thoughts, is perfect prudence; but such prudence as, with them, would throw a Christian writer into the bottom of contempt.

There are more reasons for our deists to be dissatisfied with themselves than those already given. *Infidel* is an opprobrious name: but time was, when deism was the true religion; and they are for still retaining the credit once due to that character. It is therefore fit for a friend to Christianity, nor less fit for a friend to them, to take notice, that it is impossible for a good man, that is, one aiming at the divine favour above all things, to reject an offered revelation, without enquiring into its title to the high character it assumes; and that it is impossible (in my opinion) for a reasonable man to reject the Christian revelation, if he does enquire. He, therefore, who continues a deist, in a land enlightened by the Gospel, must be wanting in goodness, or reason; must be either criminal, or dull. None, therefore, can be more mistaken than they that profess deism for the credit of superior understanding, or for the sake of exercising a more pure and perfect virtue. Yet these are the only pretences which they do, or dare, avow, for their fatal choice. Must not then their real motive be of a nature which they think prudent to conceal?

But to conceal it, is not easy: for reason, our of itself defective reason, in many points of the last moment to man, wants, wishes, calls for a revelation; and cannot but accept, when offered, what it calls for:

that is, reasonable deists cannot but become Christians, where the Gospel shines.

Or argue thus (for it admits of various proof): God Almighty would not have made a revelation, but in order to be received. And by whom received? Doubtless by the reasonable and good. And if by some of them, why not by all? And if all the reasonable and good receive it, what must they be that reject it? Therefore revealed religion rejected, proves natural religion disobeyed. I said, above, that deists were blameable, how good soever their lives might be: but now it seems to appear that their lives cannot be good. Others, perhaps, have forborne speaking so plain, out of charity. I venture on it out of what I conceive to be charity greater still; for nothing that can awaken them can be kindly suppressed.

Cornelius, the centurion, though one of the best of men, thought not the belief of the Gospel unnecessary to his salvation. But modern deists, wiser, not better, than he, have their objections to the Gospel. Their chief objection is against its mysteries. There is nothing mysterious in it, but with regard to things which we either cannot, or need not, understand:—cannot, through the limitation of the human intellect; or need not, through the sufficiency of other means and motives for our leading good lives. To what amounts, then, this capital objection and charge against it? To no more than this, viz. That Christianity performs not what is impossible to be perform-

ed; for it is as impossible for its Author, Almighty God, to do more than is needful for his gracious end, viz. the good lives of mankind, as to do what in its nature is impossible to be done.

Indeed, all their objections to Christianity seem to be no more nor less than playing the best card they have; than using the best expedient they can think of, to keep themselves in countenance, and the world in the dark, as to the true motive of their apostasy. Nor are their objections to be looked on, in those that are men of sense, as an argument of their disbelief, but their dislike. They wish not the mysteries removed; for that would rob them of a favourite objection. They wish not the darkness of the mysteries removed, but transferred; transferred from the doctrines to the moral precepts. These are without a cloud; these are too plain for their purpose. None ever fully complied with these, but was easily reconciled to the mysteries of the Gospel. The disgusted, despotic heart commands the passive, obedient head, to fight its unjust quarrel, and say it is its own: so that Satan may blame them for some degree of hypocrisy in his favour, may blame them for only pretending to disbelieve. If, on the other hand, Christians were not also hypocrites; hypocrites, I mean, as to practice; they would rob the deists of their most plausible plea against us; and either lessen their numbers, or increase their shame.

I hope that some of the deists, at least some of those whose principles are endangered by them, may

admit some little impression from what has been offered. I hope they may discern, and own, the self-accusation which is evidently implied in our deists' renunciation of Christianity; or, if I am mistaken, that they will set me right; for if I have wronged them, I have wronged them much. For in what a disadvantageous light appear these deserters from Christianity in these pages? A deistical tongue, a Christian conscience, and a partly pagan heart! What a sad composition is this! It is a far heavier charge than I wish to find true.

But it is a natural question, "How comes it to "pass, that men of parts should so much disaffect "the Scriptures, so admirable, and still more and "more admirable, in proportion to the discernment "of their reader?"

Can it be from ignorance? It may be so, if their hearts are worse than their heads; for there are parts of Scripture which none but a good man can well understand: "Rejoice always; and again I say, Re-"joice." This must appear to the vicious absurd, because impracticable; and therefore uninspired. To rejoice in tribulation, they have neither cause nor power. Thus, bad manners almost necessarily render men infidels to Holy Writ. On the contrary, a good life is a key to the Scriptures. "The secret of the "Lord is with those that fear him:"—a text this, as unintelligible to the vicious as the former. As he has had no experience, so neither has he any comprehension of its truth. The good man comprehends, and

feels it too. Thus the Scripture, like the cloudy pillar which it records, is light to the true Israelite, but darkness to the Egyptians. Hence acutest understandings in religious debates often lose their edge.

Can that cause we seek, be vanity? It may be said of the viscount's writings as of Catiline, *Satis eloquentiæ, sapientiæ parum.* Had his eloquence been less; had those talents been denied him, which flattered him with hope of shining a first lustre in the lettered world, he had escaped a temptation which has evidently been too hard for his prudence; and a common-sized head had, probably, left his heart in safety. So formidable a possession is an immortal pen (if his is immortal); a pen more fatal to its master, than Cato's sword.

Or might not envy be the cause we seek? "But "can these men envy Christians, whom they quit on "account of our unhappy mistake?" Man is not only desirous, but ambitious too, of happiness. He but ill bears that another shall be happier than himself; because superior happiness is a natural argument of superior wisdom or worth. The man of a libertine life knows that the good Christian, if his religion is true, is, on the whole, much happier than himself: therefore he wishes it to be false; and endeavours to find it so. And strong endeavours to be in the wrong, Heaven will punish with success. It will permit them to believe their own lie; that is, to fall on their own sword, which was drawn against the truth:

Non hos quæsitum munus in usus. VIRG.

And I am the more inclined to impute their opposition to envy, rather than vanity; because pure vanity is consistent with good-nature, and may be a very candid thing: but envy has bitterness, and ill-will; and ridicule is the genuine child of ill-nature; ridicule, that offensive brat of which they are so fond.

Now though nothing is more improper in important debates than raillery; yet can I make some apology for them. They may, possibly, perceive, that the load on their own misgiving consciences would sink them, were it not for the light expedient of forced mirth, like a bladder filled with wind, to keep them above water: and that they sometimes have their doubts, and misgivings of heart, it is reasonable to believe. To give full established security is the incommunicable privilege of the Gospel.

For the reasons above, I venture to set down envy among the causes of infidelity, though (I think) by others overlooked. And further, I believe it to be a very principal cause of lettered infidelity in the world. Other, but not greater vices are, doubtless, the chief cause of infidelity in lower and illiterate life; where sense has no rival in thought, but tyrannizes alone.

But whatever is the cause of their infidelity, be it ignorance, vanity, envy, or any other vice, their infidelity will naturally have some effect in our favour. It is much to be hoped, that it will put us on our guard, and make us better men. Our leading a bad life, is playing into their hands. It is giving them an argument in the debate, against ourselves. Though the

argument is bad, yet it is an argument still. And since they have none but bad arguments, and such they will make use of, we should not increase the number. This is like furnishing them with ammunition to protract the war; and though the war protracted will not hurt us, yet will it hurt them; and as we are Christians, that should give us an equal concern.

Secondly, Christianity may thank its opponents for much new light from time to time thrown in on the sublime excellence of its nature, and the manifestation of its truth; opponents, in some sort, more welcome than its friends; as they do it signal service without running it in debt, and have no demand on our gratitude for the favours they confer. The stronger its adversaries, the greater its triumph: the more it is disputed, the more indisputably will it shine. With what pious pleasure must you see the brightest talents striking at it, with the most hearty good-will, yet dropping harmless, like old Priam's spear?

Telum imbelle sine ictu
Conjecit; rauco quod protinus ære repulsum,
Et summo clypei nequicquam umbone pependit. VIRG.

Christianity, that great support of man's welfare and God's glory, like a well-built arch, the greater load of opposition and reproach its enemy lays on it, the stronger it stands.

Thirdly, Their antichristian writings may detect them: for since (as shewn above) a false faith, or no faith at all, is the natural consequence of a bad life, it is possible that the gentlemen in the opposition, while

they are giving us their opinions, may be giving us more: they may be discovering their morals, while they mean only to teach us their creed: and thus they may carry, like Bellerophon, their own condemnation, while they imagine they are graciously conveying intelligence and new light to mankind: so that the old proverb, *Bellerophontis literæ*, may be a proper motto for the learned labours of them all.

But condemnation from others will be much more supportable than their own; if that should fall on them. And where is he on whom it shall not one day fall? If a man born blind, who had never so much as heard of the sun, moon, and stars, should suddenly receive sight; he would not be more astonished at the first rushing in of those material glories, than would the man, by vice struck blind to religion, be, at his first conviction of heavenly truths, viz. divine manifestations, awful revelations, fulfilled prophecies, numberless miracles; and one unbroken chain of marvellous expedients, from before creation to this hour, for our salvation; those spiritual luminaries; those (dare I say) sun, moon, and stars, of the moral world; if God should give him light. Till then, walking in darkness, he must mistake danger for safety, shame for glory, and mischief for pleasure. Like the blinded of Sodom, he reaches eagerly after, and presses hard for, enjoyment; but of real enjoyment, of true felicity, he cannot find the door; as I propose shewing in my next.

If some part of it may seem too severe, I must ob-

serve, that no man can strike fire with a feather. A fire elemental is diffused through all nature, though locked up in dark matter, and unapparent in most parts of our globe. Thus I conceive that there is divine grace spread through all hearts (where not entirely quenched by vice), though inactive and dormant in them. No slight animadversion can awake it. It must be a blow of some force that strikes it out of a heart of flint. And such there must be in these days of darkness, when few sparks of grace are apparent. Such there must be when infidelity prevails; for infidelity and faith are the day and night of the moral world. One reveals, the other hides heaven from our thoughts. Happy am I if this letter shall occasion the smallest dawn on but one single heart, in this our grand eclipse. With you, dear sir, the dawn is long since past; and that you may continue in the light, till Heaven, at that knock of faith which only will be heard, shall admit you into perfect day, where undisputed truth, and unmistaken pleasure, with endless glory, crown the just; this is the prayer of

Your affectionate

Humble servant.

LETTER II.

ON PLEASURE.

DEAR SIR,

I NOW proceed to say something of Pleasure, that subject which you so warmly recommend; not aware, I believe, that it may be long before men, whose faults set the public eye at defiance, will learn to blush when alone in their closets. And till then, what hope of much reformation from the pen? Besides, though our transgressions with regard to pleasure are great, yet they are not new. To the scandal of the antediluvians be it spoken, there were British iniquities before the flood. To such a degree have all moral subjects been exhausted, that it is difficult for a writer on them not to repeat, though he is no plagiary. But your desires are an apology for my deficiencies in compliance with them.

Whether we are more hardened in infidelity, or softened in pleasure, may be disputed: but none can deny that the love of pleasure is the root of every crime. Theft, murder, perjury, are a few of its fatal fruits; nor the worst. But I shall not dip so deep in its consequences; yet deep enough to render the

name of a man of pleasure, which some affect for their honour, not only ridiculous, but detestable.

What an extravagant dominion does pleasure exercise over us! It is not only the pestilence that walketh in darkness; but an arrow that destroyeth at noon-day. The moon hides her face at our midnight enormities; and the morning blushes on our unfinished debauch. I am almost tempted to say, that our impudent folly puts nature out of countenance. But there is no need by words to exaggerate the fatal truth. Our luxury is beyond example, and beyond bounds; it stops not at the poor; even they that live on alms are infected with it.

It has often been observed, that it is with states as with men. They have their birth, growth, health, distemper, decay, and death. Men sometimes drop suddenly by an apoplexy; states by conquest; in full vigour, both. As man owes his mortality to original sin; some states owe their fall to some defect, or infelicity, in their original constitution. But contracted distemper is the most common ruin of states, and men. And what national distemper more mortal than our own? On the soft beds of luxury most kingdoms have expired.

If causes should not fail of their usual effect; if our national distemper, far from being cutaneous at present, should reach the vitals of our state; how applicable to this opulent, proud, profligate metropolis (which calls the sea her own, and whose vices, more diffusive, are without a shore), would be the prophet's

sacred dirge over ancient Tyre; whose sea-born wealth, and hell-born iniquity, let it not be said, was but a prelude to our own? And yet if we proceed in our infernal career, that most infamous reproach may become but too true.

The sublime and most memorable words run thus; and I cannot but think that, at present, they must have a formidable sound in a British ear: "Is "this the joyous city? whose antiquity is of days re-"mote? whose merchants were princes, and her traf-"fickers the honourable of the earth? whose revenue "was the harvest of rivers? and her exchange the "mart of nations? who sat as a queen; stretched out "her hand over the seas; and shook the kingdoms? "But she is fallen! she is fallen! Heaven has stained "the pride of all glory." How sorely must you be pained at the report!

Has not Britain reason to be more deeply struck with this part of Scripture than the rest of mankind? The prophecy as yet, indeed, through mercy, is unfulfilled in us: but if Britain continues, like Tyre,—"To sing as a harlot; to take the harp; to make "sweet melody; sing many songs; turn to her hire; "and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of "the world,"—her fall is to be feared, unless the fate of most former empires betray us into mistake; and that national poison which has ever proved mortal, is mortal no more. If the fate of kingdoms is lodged in a just and impartial hand, what but the grossest self-flattery can banish our fears? And if

our fears are banished, leave it not unobserved, that our very want of fear is a proof of our danger: for Heaven infatuates, when it determines to destroy.

" But such a general face of affluence and gaiety. " Are these signs of ruin?" Not signs only, but causes of it too. Not Babylon alone has been smitten at a banquet, and perished in its joys. Most nations have been gayest, when nearest to their end; and, like a taper in the socket, have blazed as they expired.

Were our fathers to rise from their graves, they would conceive that their fortune had thrown them on some day of public festivity, nor imagine that every day was drunk of the same disease. By our gaiety we seem to celebrate the perpetual triumph of the millennium; by our vices, to add to it the manners of the antediluvian world; and by our security under them, to put full confidence in the Divine promise that the world shall be drowned no more. If with the vices of the antediluvians we had their years too, more might be said in our excuse: but to weigh such a moment against eternity, shews that the balance is in very weak hands. The world, which the Divine vengeance swept away for its enormities, was incapable of so great a guilt.

But in so general a dissolution of manners, are there none that stand entitled to more particular blame? Are not our great patrons of luxury a sort of anti-Curtii, who leap into the gulf for the ruin of their country? Their country's ruin they threaten by the malignity of their example; while by the profusion of their expence

they nearly finish their own. What a weakness is self-denial? what idle self-tormentors are penitents? what wretched lunatics, or gross suicides, are the noble army of martyrs, if these men are in the right? How cheap would their pleasures come, if they cost them nothing more than their health, credit, and estates!

Pleasure is in some sort more pernicious than direct vice. Vice has, naturally, some horror in it. It startles and alarms the conscience, and puts us on our guard. Pleasure, under the colour of being harmless, has an opiate in it; it stupifies and besots. In the soft lap of pleasure conscience falls asleep. Vice, losing its horror, becomes familiar. And as vice increases, some expedient becomes necessary to reconcile us to ourselves. Thus, looking out for some shadow of excuse, we naturally slide into groundless doubts, and become infidels out of pure self-defence.

And as pleasure makes us infidels, by stupifying the conscience; so it makes us very bad husbands of temporal enjoyments, by darkening our understandings; and this unqualifies us for the very point to which alone we pretend.

It is this cloud on their understandings which hinders our voluptuaries from discerning, that their blind rage for pleasure turns blessings into their reverse. Birth, education, and abundance, are great blessings; but, abused by pleasure into motives and instruments of indulgence, birth is more ignoble than obscurity; knowledge is more pernicious than ignorance; and abundance more a misfortune than want. Men of rank

(and of such I speak), if wrong, can scarce avoid sinning beyond themselves. How pestilential their example falls on the lower world, which, under the welcome force of such illustrious authority, turn dissolute, as much for the sake of their credit and fortune, as of their lusts; pride, and interest, bringing needless succour to loose desire; and Tyburn has sometimes reaped, what assemblies have sown. Great men in the wrong, are powerful engines of mischief; and, like bursting bombs, destroy themselves and all around them.

And as to the two supreme blessings and glories of man, their reason and immortality; these, as they manage it, flame out into vengeance too great to be mentioned without horror. Their reason serves only to render them more guilty; and their immortality to render endless the sad wages of their guilt.

It is this cloud on our understanding which makes us so little masters in the very science we profess. Happiness is our study; but are we not dunces in it? We know not, or seem not to know, that all real enjoyment lies within the compass of God's commands; which abridge not, but defend them: that when we dip too deep in pleasure, we stir a sentiment that renders it impure and noxious: that (as much a paradox as it may seem) the best means of arriving at the true pleasures of the body, is to preserve and cultivate the powers of the soul; and that a good understanding is, in man, the source and security of mere animal delight.

Let these gentlemen take notice that I am not

against enjoyment; I am as great a lover of it as they; for without a relish of the good things of life, we cannot be thankful. Enjoy, but enjoy reasonably, and thankfully to the great Donor; that will secure us from excess. To enjoy, is our wisdom, and our duty; it is the great lesson of human life; but a lesson which few have learned; and none less than these, who proclaim themselves masters of art in it.

It is this pleasure-bred cloud on the understanding, which makes us forget that virtue is the health of the soul: that all provision and parade from without, can make a sensualist just as happy, as the same can make an invalid: that both have pains adhering, necessarily, to their present state: that both have rather remedies, than joys: that assemblies, balls, masquerades, &c. are but as well-stored hospitals, unnecessary to the sound, and but poor palliatives to the sick: though pretenders to more than health, they confess our distemper; and, what is worse, increase the distemper they confess; and that of distempers the worst, a wrong judgment in our most important point.

I grant, that in the boundless field of licentiousness, some bastard joys may rise, that look gay, more especially at a distance; but they soon wither. No joys are always sweet, and flourish long, but such as have self-approbation for their root, and the Divine favour for their shelter. We are for rootless joys, joys beyond appetite; which is the sole root of sensual delight. We are for joys, not of man's native growth, but forced up by luxurious art; dunged by great ex-

pence; and shone on, not by the Divine favour, but a strong imagination, which gives them all their little taste; and makes them apt, like other crude fruits, to surfeit and destroy. We are, in a word, for joys of our own creation, the seeds of which Heaven never sowed in our hearts. But we may as well invade another prerogative of Heaven, and, with the tyrant of Elis, pretend to make thunder and lightning, as real joy. I say real joy; joy we may make, but not cheerfulness. Joy may subsist without thought; cheerfulness rises from it. Joy is from the pulse; cheerfulness from the heart. That may give a momentary flash of pleasure; this alone makes a happy man. And happy men there may be, who never laughed in their lives: and in a situation where reason calls for the reverse, there is not in nature so melancholy a thing as joy.

It is this intellectual cloud, which hangs, like a fog, over every gay resort of our moral invalids (though invisible to common eyes), which flings us not only into mistakes, but contradictions. How sick are we of yesterday? yet how fond of to-morrow, though devoted to the same cheat as the past? which stings us into contradictions not only in reason, but contradictions to sense. We cannot believe that fatigue is fatigue; let its cause be what it will. Too much recreation tires as much as too much business: yet one we swallow; are choked by the other. The man of business has, at least, his seventh day's rest. Our fever for folly never intermits. Our week has no sab-

bath in it. So much harder is the master whom we serve, than that of better men; and yet, to our infamous honour be it spoken, we are better servants than they. How do we run, labour, expend; expose ourselves, hurt our families, resist unbounded, eternal temptations to wisdom; offer up the rich sacrifice of conscience and understanding; watch; watch late; and all, but pray, for his service? Quite jaded with protracted amusements, we yawn over them. The dull drone of nominal diversion, still humming on when the short tune of enjoyment is over, lulls us quite asleep. Like the bear in the fable, we hug our darling to death. Instead of rejoicing in tribulation (of which few among us ever heard), we sorrow in delight: for, to speak the truth (though we would not have it divulged), we tread this eternal round of vanities, less for the pleasure it brings, than for the pain it suspends. It is a refuge, not a prize. Like criminals (as we are), we fly to it from our much-injured, unforgiving foes, from ourselves; which chide and sting us, when alone; when together, we support each other's spirits; which is like sailors clinging to each other for safety, when the vessel is sinking. We fly from ourselves, because we first fly from our Maker. Wretched flight! Hell is nothing but an entire absence from him; and every partial departure has its proportion of it.

But those deep draughts of pleasure which besot us, must answer for all absurdities; and, among the rest, for our entire ignorance of the nature of that

world in which we live. Mirth at a funeral is scarce more indecent and unnatural, than a perpetual flight of gaiety, and burst of exultation, in a world like this: a world which may seem a paradise to fools, but is a hospital with the wise: a world, in which bare escape is a prime felicity: *Effugere est triumphus.*

The numberless pains of body and mind; the dark solemn approaches to, or dismal vestibules of, the grave, as well as opening graves themselves, are so thick scattered over the face of the whole earth, that an unpetrified heart cannot look round, without feeling an inevitable damp, and general disconsolation; and venting a sigh universal for the whole family of Adam, for the lot of all mankind. Nothing but strong faith in eternal life could hinder tears from bursting over it: nor are tears too much; for sympathy is the chief duty of human life.

Were one-tenth part of the wretchedness seen that is felt, it would strike us with horror. Heaven means to make one-half of the species a moral lecture to the other. It surrounds us with deplorable objects, not more for the sake of the wretched, than for our own; that our compassion awakened, may awaken our prudence; and teach us what we have to do, by shewing us what we have to fear. Shall the rich and the well educated, throw their abundance down the sink of unprofitable and untasted delights, while untaught multitudes mistake, and sin; and indigent multitudes shiver, and starve? While we think we are sparing expences, we are running in debt. How deep are

we in arrears to the distressed? The distressed have, from reason, as just a demand on our superfluities, as we have, from law, on our stewards for our estates. But this is no play-debt, and therefore, without dishonour, undischarged.

Is then my repeated censure of intellectual darkness too severe? I wish it were. But, alas! how distant from their thoughts are the points the most important? How foreign to their interest, and all that is nearest their hearts? When I speak of their darkness, I do not forget my own. There is not that man on earth that does not well deserve censure, and even from them. But there is difference in deviation from the right. Mulattoes are not Ethiopians. I grant in their excuse, that, though all can see folly in pleasures past, yet must he be wiser than Solomon who sees it in those to come. Yet wiser than Solomon, in this respect, must we be, or continue mere idiots; and idiots with regard to the present life: for this life's enjoyment lies, chiefly, in our title to the joys of the next; as earth becomes fruitful from the kind influence of the distant sun.

And now, what occasion of advancing any thing more to the condemnation of these sons of Epicurus, and in disfavour of pleasure, than this, viz. That by darkening our understandings, it robs us of this world; and by stupifying our consciences, of the next. So far are they from their boasted happiness, that even in the judgment of a heathen (not to mention the Scripture, of much less authority with them), they are dead

while yet alive. *Is demum* VIVERE, *atque animâ frui videtur; qui alicui intentus negotio, aut artis bonæ, aut præclari facinoris, famam quærit.*—SALLUST.

It is said of their master Epicurus, *Deos verbis reliquit, re sustulit.* By his and their goddess, Pleasure, they do just the same. They loudly boast, and effectually destroy, it; the first, through want of modesty; the last, through want of understanding. But they must keep themselves in countenance, though out of heart; and make themselves some small amends from vanity, for what is wanting to reason and to sense.

Nor tread they their master's steps in this alone. He out of a swarm of dancing atoms, was for making a world: They out of a giddy whirl of innumerable amusements, those minute particles of pleasure, are for forming happiness; a system equally philosophical, and of equal success. A God alone can make one; the godlike only can achieve the other: and where are they to be found in this hopeful school?

The one thing necessary for happiness is in common to both worlds, this and the next. In vain we seek a different receipt for it, one in time, another in eternity. Virtue wanting, every thing else becomes necessary to happiness, and ineffectual. To what amounts, then, the boast of their numberless felicities? It brings, in proof of their happiness, a demonstration of their misery. A good man shall be satisfied from himself alone. A bad man shall be dissatisfied with all the world at his devotion.

But there is a third particular, in which, if they had followed their master, it would have been more for their advantage, and credit. An indulgent Providence has abundantly provided us with irreproveable pleasures; why are these swept away with an ungrateful hand, to make room for poisons, of our own deadly composition, to be placed in their stead? Epicurus was in love with his gardens. But that is an amour too innocent for them. A garden has ever had the praise, and affection, of the wise. What is requisite to make a wise and happy man, but reflection and peace? and both are the natural growth of a garden. Nor is a garden only a promoter of a good man's happiness, but a picture of it; and, in some sort, shews him to himself. Its culture, order, fruitfulness, and seclusion from the world, compared to the weeds, wildness, and exposure of a common field, is no bad emblem of a good man, compared to the multitude. A garden weeds the mind; it weeds it of worldly thoughts; and sows celestial seed in their stead. For what see we there, but what awakens in us our gratitude to Heaven? A garden to the virtuous is a paradise still extant; a paradise unlost. What a rich present from Heaven of sweet incense to man was wafted in that breeze? What a delightful entertainment of sight glows on yonder bed, as if in kindly showers the watery bow had shed all its most celestial colours on it? Here are no objects that fire the passions: none that do not instruct the understanding, and better the heart, while they delight the sense; but not the sense

of these men. To them the tulip has no colours; the rose no scent: their palate for pleasure is so deadened, and burnt out, by the violent stroke of higher tastes, as leaves no sensibility for the softer impressions of these; much less for the relish of those philosophic, or moral, sentiments, which the verdant walk, clear stream, embowering shade, pendant fruit, or rising flower, those speechless, not powerless, orators, ever praising their great Author, inspire: much less still for their religious inspirations. Who cannot look on a flower till he frightens himself out of infidelity? Religion is the natural growth of the works of God; and infidelity, of the inventions of men.

Spiritually blind, deaf, and stupid, they see not the great Omnipresent walking in the garden; they hear not his call; they know not that they are naked; they hide not among the trees; but stand in open defiance of his laws. Religion is far from them.

And where can we hope religion, if not in age? And are there Hecubas to be found among the bright Helens of our times? Is diversion grown a leveller, like death? Can assemblies banish distinction, and shew us all dates, like church-yards? The latter, for their years, is the more proper scene. Give me leave, sir, to address them; and address them in haste: they may die by to-morrow. To-night they are shining at the assembly. Thither, for a moment, imagination transports me to attend them.

"So various, ladies! and cogent, are the reasons

" which might call you to this place, that I am at a " loss which to thank for the honour it receives. " Come you to admire, or to be admired? Your " modesty declines the last. Come you out of kind- " ness, then, to authorise those amusements, you " choose not to adorn? Or come you, out of com- " passion, to make these young criminals appear " more innocent, than they could appear uncom- " pared with superior indiscretion? Or come you " out of piety, to return thanks at this religious " house, for your so narrowly escaping the grave? " Or come you out of pure generosity, to heighten " the mirth of the night? Your point is carried. " What borrowed ornaments are these? Is vanity " still in its spring? Is the folly of hairless heads " putting forth its gay blossoms in the December of " life? Age cannot drop its dignity, and yet retain " its privileges. It must be laughed at, if it will " not be revered; and objects of reverence cannot " enter at these doors. We reverence age, as we " reverence noble birth; on supposition, both: if " our supposition proves false, our homage dies.

" A little entertainment, you say, is natural—What " a portentous jumble of seasons, what a violation of " nature is this; winter dancing with the spring? " Where are the first partakers of your pastimes, when " pastimes became you? Their very monuments are " in ruins. What real connection of heart, or inter- " ests, can you have with any now alive? And with-

" out such connection, how insipid your commerce " with them? Sure you cannot approve Mezentius's " connection of the living with the dead.

" Hang your hours, though, probably, so few, so " very heavy on your hands, that you had rather bear " contempt, than them? Is it drowned by the " sprightly viol, or hear you yon solemn bell? Wants " that the power to call you to your closets, which " calls your grand-children to their graves? Is it " thus you discharge the duties of age to the rising " generation? Whatever seeds of prudence you would " sow in their hearts, before they can take root, " these vanities blow away; especially, if you, like " the ladies of Lapland, heighten the * *hurricane* " yourselves.

" Have you never heard, my good ladies, of the " redemption of time? You carry yours to market, " and sell it for nothing; nay, you dearly buy it off " your hands. Can nothing but such trifles, such " murder of time, make you think that you are alive? " Can nothing but the stroke of death convince you, " you shall die? To their beauty alone, too much " amusement is forgiven, even in the young. What, " then, have you to plead?—That which is fairer " than beauty, if you will call it to your aid: virtue " can reconcile our respect to wrinkles. It can " render age amiable, when bloom smiles in vain. " But vice, and deformity, when twisted together,

* Some assemblies so called.

" is such a Gorgon, as turns the tenderest heart into " stone.

" Pardon, ladies! that I presume to call that vice, " which you will soften by some milder name. What " is innocence in youth, may be vice in years. Be- " sides, mark the mischief of what you call harmless " expedients to smooth the rugged path of life. You " spread that path with snares, to the ruin of those " you love. You make parental authority, that na- " tural safeguard of youth, their temptation to folly; " and filial obedience, so lovely, so pious, the strange " cause of their crimes. Through such mazes of " more than folly, when parents lead the way; child- " ren, out of pure duty, may tread their wrong " steps. Or, if they have more discernment, or " more grace; what follows!—What you yourselves " will be shocked to hear, and I to tell,—a daughter " blushing for her who bore her; which, to my " knowledge and astonishment, has been the too " memorable and too deplorable case."

Here I would fain leave off, and throw a mantle over the nakedness of our own sex: but that would be too great partiality. It is too sure Adam also fell. As I have spoken to his daughters, I must speak, sir, by your permission, now to his aged sons. I can speak with more freedom to these: I was forced to spare his daughters out of decency.

" Ye first on roll for eternity! why this waste of " time? Why is its date quite erased? Your spruce " appearance is a perfect forgery. And deserves it

" not the wonted penalty for it? You, for whom it
" is almost as unnatural, as for a mole, to be seen
" above-ground, what mean you by trespassing on
" this nether world? Or if here, ye deserters from
" death! to whose corps you belong, why list into
" so very foreign a service? Death, the more he is
" forgot, the more formidable he grows. But how
" could you forget him, who have seen him snatch-
" ing from your bosom such numbers of your friends?
" Has he so often knocked at the next door, and so
" frequently shook his lance in vain? Will you drop
" into the grave on your road to the ball? You, who,
" one full age of man expired, commence a new,
" with all the wantonness of youth, by an antichris-
" tian regeneration, a second birth into all the
" foibles of a sensual life! Consider, what tender
" reverence, what respect mixed with compassion,
" is paid to years owning their infirmities, and sup-
" porting them as they ought. But infirmities of
" body dissembled, that those of the mind may be
" the more indulged; a vicious mind stinging on a
" jaded body into shame; this calls not only for the
" scorn, but detestation of mankind.

" Consider, sirs! is there not some mistake? Do
" not your minds, through disorder of the machine,
" go too slow, and misrepresent the time of day?
" Else, how could men, who have not space suffi-
" cient left between them and their graves, for life's
" wonted delusions to display their gay phantoms;

" who can hardly hope to repeat to-morrow the " farce of to-day; still persist to be boys? Young " men, indeed, may see visions of what never shall " come to pass; and be ravished with them: but " old men in their senses, cannot so much as dream " dreams of delight; such delight, I mean, as yours. " What delight can these gay scenes afford you? " I should think you should be more mortified than " amused, where you scarce can see a face that does " not make you look twenty years older than before. " Hope you any regard or affection among them? " No; despair even of toleration, but when these " moderns, for amusement, dip into you as into " chronological tables, to know what happened be- " fore the flood. Find friends in coevals, or despair.

" Indeed my good friends, in one sense, most cer- " tainly you are strangers upon earth; why will you " not be so in the best? That you might be so in the " best, is, probably, the sole reason you are still alive. " Men in years, and the clergy, are the two natura " supports of virtue and religion; that is, the two " columns on which public welfare is built: and the " first is the stronger, as there is less prejudice " against it. They both have higher obligations to " the wise than other men: and if the world sees " those higher obligations fail of their due effect, " their consciences will sit easier under the neglect " of their own. The clergy are volunteers; the " aged are pressed by nature into the service of

" wisdom; and if they both desert, vice may tri-
" umph without a battle, and virtue fall without a
" mourner.

" Ye fine men of rank and parts! a common sol-
" dier (your contempt no doubt), shall reproach you.
" One of them, requesting dismission from Charles
" Vth, gave this reason for it, *Inter vitæ negotia ex-*
" *tremumque diem oportet aliquod temporis intercedere.*
" Much more *inter vitæ voluptates,* and our last hour.
" Will you go to your graves with your eyes shut, as
" Plutarch tells you the Spartans went to their beds
" in the dark? If so, as reasonable men in years
" enter their graves as a harbour, you will strike on
" yours as on a rock. You do not only expose your-
" selves, but your whole species. When they that
" have most reason to be wise, are the farthest from
" it; it sinks the dignity of our common nature;
" brings, beyond all other enormities, a reproach on
" mankind; and gives each individual, as a sufferer,
" as a sharer in the scandal, a just right, not only of
" censure, but revenge.

" This will excuse my indignation at two noto-
" rious offenders: and therefore I shall dare name
" them. Who are they, but Sedbury and Torris-
" mond? Their pictures have been partly drawn by
" the famous Seymour: I shall sketch the rest.
" These are two perfect heroes in this transgres-
" sion; old offenders in an offence, which, till old,
" they could not begin: who join the gallantries of
" Paris to the years of Nestor: who read a play-bill,

" and a bill of mortality, with the same sensation
" and aspect: who can amuse themselves with a
" cathedral service, and go for an hour's diversion
" to the funeral of a friend!

" How many friends have they lost? that is, how
" often has their confidence in the world been shaken
" at the root? And give they still full proof of their
" obstinate adherence to, and cordial incorporation
" with it? Has it not daily crumbled away in their
" fingers? and will they hug it still? How can their
" hearts still swell with those flattened bubbles of idle
" joy, so often pricked by death?

" Ye two antediluvian youths! what greater folly
" on earth than that of confounding seasons, and
" not give their respective appropriations to the dif-
" ferent periods of life? Nothing can be in credit
" that is out of character; and credit you affect, no
" one more. If you would find it, let these gentle
" hints, like the light touch of a magic wand, make
" you shrink from your vernal bloom; and wither at
" least to the decencies of fourscore; for I would
" make you some allowance still.

" Know ye not, that they who in their wrinkled
" decline outdive in folly the temerities of youth,
" and die immaturely at twice the age of man, are
" void of shame from censure human and divine;
" quite callous to God and men? Know you not,
" that such faults after seventy are as severely judg-
" ed by this world as the next? To be born like a
" wild ass's colt, is natural; but not to live so, and

"retain the colt's tooth, when all the man's are "fallen out. Time was, when to centaurize was "less ridiculous. But unless your equestrian part is "now dismissed, laughter is irresistible; as your "friend Horace assures you:

> 'Solve senescentem mature sanus *equum*, ne
> Peccet ad extremum *ridendus*.'

"Instead of surfeiting every public place with your "ungodly omnipresence, you should be reserved as "the great Mogul. A little self-annihilation would "be the wisest way even for your own vanity; for "the more we forget our age, the more we remind "others of it; and the younger we would appear, so "much older shall we look in all eyes but our own.

"Yes, gentlemen! to preserve your dignity, retire "like eastern kings. Kings, indeed, you may be, and "glorious ones too, if you will be wise: For wis- "dom is the crown of old age; and the fear of the "Lord is its glory."

Since the witchcraft of pleasure is so strong as to turn young men into old by their infirmities; and old into young by their affectation and conceit; let us look a little more narrowly into the perverse composition of that marvellous being which we style a man of pleasure; and make somewhat, if possible, like an analysis of it.

The man of pleasure (though I fear he never asked himself the question), of what nature, species, or rank in the creation conceives he himself to be?

Does this yet unconstrued, undeciphered creature, consider himself as an immortal being? or only as a rational? or as a mere animal? If as an immortal, let him regard things eternal: If as a rational, let reason reign: If as a mere animal, let him indulge appetite, but not go beyond it. When appetite is satisfied, an animal's meal is over. If as a composition of all three; let it not be a confusion of them; let it be a composition; and order alone can preserve that name.

No; he is for neither of these. He is an immortal, without a sense of immortality. He is a rational, dethroning reason; and an animal, transgressing appetite: an unhappy combination, a wretched chaos of all, without the benefit of either; nay, a sufferer from each, because an abuser of all. They are not, as Heaven designed them, three parties in alliance for his happiness; but three conspirators of his own making, against his peace.

For mark this immortal maze of human ruin; appetite, reason, and immortality, violate, and are violated by each other. Subtle reason finds arts and arguments to tempt appetite beyond her bounds. Unbounded appetite with stupefying sensuality bribes reason to drop her dominion. Her dominion dropped, renders blind immortality regardless of things eternal: and they being disregarded, all immortality's boundless powers and desires devolve on things temporal; and, devolved on them, with violence impel deposed reason and riotous appetite, to mon-

strous lengths of extravagance, which had otherwise lain quite beyond both their power and desire.

Thus stands the perplexed, and hitherto not unravelled case. The man, in his constitution, debauches the brute: the brute, debauched, dethrones the man: the dethroned man, and debauched brute, join in rebellion against the immortal: the subdued immortal resigns to them its infinite powers and desires; which they exert to the destruction absolute of all three.

The man, if not in alliance with an immortal, never would have had an unbounded power and desire. If not in alliance with a brute, he never would have debased them to mean and sordid ends; never would have confined them to things below: but being joined to both, and, through perverseness and stupidity, rendering celestial immortality inglorious, and terrestrial brutality more brutal, he creates a far more miserable being than either of them apart could possibly have been. We may therefore congratulate the mere brute on his high prerogative of being incapable of becoming such a monster of rationality as this. And the man of pleasure, if modest, will for the future, give the wall to his horse. He, like Codrus, disguises himself, puts off his dignity, to rush into danger; and happy for him, if he meets with nothing worse than death.

Reason and immortality, the man and the immortal, these only occasion the calamity; and the poor animal, an innocent ally, must suffer with them.

If your sister's favourites will contemplate them-

selves in any glass but their own, let them look in this true mirror: and though the features are somewhat monstrous, let them not disown them; since they may change them when they please; and they are pictured so minutely, that they may be the more inclined so to do. For what a hideous ruin of humanity is this? The world after the deluge, a less melancholy sight. Such shocking footsteps sin leaves behind it in nature, animate and inanimate. Reason and virtue are the sole beauty and sole salvation of all. Through all her realms creation groans without it. The Deity is all reason in his nature, conduct, and commands. The great, invariable, eternal, alternative, throughout his creation, is, or reason, or ruin. To how many ears in this happy metropolis is this dismal news?

I was going to say, that reason is the sole basis of happiness; but it is not. There are three kinds of happiness on earth, gradually less and less. There is a happiness from the exertion of reason, where reason is given: this is the happiness of a man. There is an inferior happiness from the gratification of sense, where reason is denied: this is the happiness of a brute. And there is a calamitous happiness where reason is suppressed or abused: and this is the happiness of a wretch. You see then in what line of happiness our fine men must be content to rank.

I know your sister will call my analysis above, a labyrinth of sophistry. I will therefore give the man of pleasure's character in a manner less perplexed, and

which she may probably censure as too plain; and may wish a clue were wanting to find the meaning.

He is one, who, desirous of being more happy than any man can be, is less happy than most men are.

One, who seeks happiness every where, but where it is to be found.

One, who out-toils the labourer, not only without his wages, but paying dearly for it.

He is an immortal being that has but two marks of a man about him, upright stature, and the power of playing the fool, which a monkey has not.

He is an immortal being, that triumphs in this single, deplorable, and yet false hope, that he shall be as happy as a monkey when they are both dead; though he despairs of being so while yet alive.

He is an immortal being, that would lose none of its most darling delights, if he were a brute in the mire; but would lose them all entirely, if he were an angel in heaven.

It is certain, therefore, that he desires not to be there: and if he not so much as desires it now, how can he ever hope it, when his day of dissipation is over? And if no hope, what is our man of pleasure? A man of distraction and despair, to-morrow.

And who would buy to-day so dear, if it were so to be bought? as certainly it is not. Doubtless the true man of pleasure is he, who preserves order in his compounded nature; and gives the animal, rational, and immortal, their respective dues: who, as immortal, places in the Supreme Being his supreme

delight; and, as rational, shunning superstitious austerities; and, as animal, too great indulgencies; admits of all secular enjoyments that are strictly consistent with his supreme. The true and false man of pleasure, are brothers; born of the same parent, viz. an inextinguishable love of delight: but so superior is one to the other, that, like the fabled brothers, Castor and Pollux, one may be said to be in heaven, the other on earth.

To be more explicit, I would gather three particular branches from this general root of happiness, and present them to your sister, as a specimen of the rest.

There is no man of pleasure without his Eve; no Eve without her serpent; no serpent without its sting. He that knows not the pure delight and ever-growing tenderness of a chaste love, knows not the most that the fairest can bestow.

He that knows not the sound cordiality and constant warmth of a disinterested friendship, knows not the most that man can enjoy from man.

He that keeps not open a constant intercourse with Heaven by frequent fervours of *rational devotion*, knows not a joy still sublimer than both.

What are the joys of vice, compared to these? What think their deluded admirers of a magnanimous triumph over strong temptation; of a sweet repose in divine favour and protection; of an indefeasible right to life eternal? Is there not a certain grandeur, and solidity of happiness, in this? Is not this better than ranging from the gaming-house to brothels; and with

other little, fluttering, gilded, noxious, liquorish, insects, to be fixing on every nuisance from delight? Sons of Beelzebub the god of flies. I like not a certain modest faintheartedness in the friends and advocates of what is right. A Christian should let all see what an animation there is in Christianity above all that the world may admire besides. Christianity should be the boast, as well as comfort, of our hearts.

And now if we enquire after the cause which has brought us into that fool's paradise, on which I have dwelt so long; we shall see with what good reason pleasure and infidelity are joined together in my plan.

The Scripture ascribes the conquest of the world, that is, of its pleasure, to faith; and is very copious in enumerating renowned instances of it. Were faith as prevalent in us, we too should prove Alexanders in the moral world. All agree, that several goods being proposed for our ultimate enjoyment, it is impossible in our nature not to choose the best. All agree, that God's promises are better than any thing we can carve for ourselves. And all agree, that they are inconsistent with sin. So that he who will take out his portion in this life, must lose it in the next. What then, against our nature, and against our reason, hinders us from prosecuting our chiefest good?—Want of faith. All is resolvable into that alone.

For instance. Our temptations are of two kinds; from things that grieve, or things that please: the former fright, the latter allure us, from our virtue. From poverty, pain, disgrace, or persecution, we fly to false-

hood or fraud for escape. But those ills are not the immediate cause of it; but want of faith in God's promises, that, "He will succour us in those exigencies; "and deliver us in his good time; and make all things "work together for our good." On the other hand, when pleasure entices, and carries its point; we do not think those pleasures, be they what they will, preferable to heaven. But heaven is at a distance; and the soul is eager for present good. But why is heaven at a distance? For want of faith; for faith is "the "substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of "things not seen." It antedates the existence of that which is future; makes "our conversation in "heaven, though we are still in the body; associates "us with angels, though in our solitude; and gives "us greater joy in contemplation, than the world can "give in hand." This is true, or the conduct of those heroes in Scripture had been impracticable; and they, like ourselves, were mere men. Thus infidelity leads to pleasure; and pleasure confirms infidelity; and both together consummate ruin.

These gentlemen seem to think that the world was made in jest; that there is nothing of moment, or serious in it. There is nothing else. There is not a fly, but has had infinite wisdom concerned, not only in its structure, but in its destination. And was man made only to flutter, sing, and expire? a mere expletive in the mighty work, the marvellous operations of the Almighty! Is joy their point? He that to the best of his power has secured the final stake has a *fons peren-*

nis of joy within him. He is satisfied from himself. They, his reverse, borrow all from without. Joy wholly from without, is false, precarious, and short. From without it may be gathered; but, like gathered flowers, though fair and sweet for a season, it must soon wither, and become offensive. Joy from within, is like smelling the rose on the tree; it is more sweet and fair; it is lasting; and, I must add, immortal.

As, therefore, I have above offered those gentlemen three expedients for happiness; to persuade their acceptance of them, I shall now give three short maxims, which will sit light on their memories, and (I hope) in time, easy on their hearts.

He that will not fear, shall feel, the wrath of Heaven.

He that lives in the kingdom of sense, shall die into the kingdom of sorrow.

He shall never truly enjoy his present hour, who never thinks on his last.

Let your sister, dear sir, tell her grey pretty fellows, who are apostles to these Gentiles, that if they can advance three maxims of greater truth, or three expedients of greater efficacy to happiness, than those abovementioned; I am their convert; I exchange my Bible for Bolingbroke; and prepare for the ball: for, N. B. I am but fourscore.

With best wishes to you, and those you love, that is, all mankind; I am,

Dear sir,

Most affectionately,

Yours.

LETTER III.

ON PLEASURE.

IN ANSWER TO ONE RECEIVED.

DEAR SIR,

THE contents of your letter damp my joy in hearing from you. Even a good man's approaching death strikes us with some concern. I am sorry that the sting which pleasure left in your unhappy friend, occasions so swift a decline. How naturally we lay hold on heaven when the world sinks under us, and will support our hopes no more! The piece of devotion which you desire, you shall receive in my next. I cannot reflect on your friend's distress, and a noble youth whom I myself attended in his extremes, without dwelling still longer on pleasure, which has cost the world so dear.

If disease and infirmity make us daily visits, in the persons of our neighbours and friends; and death, by the same affecting messengers, gives us frequent notice that he will be with us soon:

If, when death arrives, all mankind, however divided before, unanimously close in one opinion, and one wish:

If libertine enjoyments hasten the approach, and heighten the dread, and imbitter the consequences, of death:

If death is the single event sure, and virtue the single pursuit indefeasible; and the divine favour the single point of absolute importance:

If that favour comes so cheap that the very leavings (in time, care, and expence) of our real enjoyments, would go a great way in the purchase of it:

If the martyr's blood makes that purchase sure; and it is impossible that martyrdom, and voluptuousness, should share the same fate:

If the fate to be shared is endless; and this life but as a moment to an age; and an age not a moment to eternity; and eternity as much ours, as the present hour:

If he that is over fond of the present, or high in expectation from any future hour, either knows not this world, or believes not in the next:

If all this is true; that is, if it is day at noon; how happy, like your friend Eusebius, to strike early into the right path; and not so long to slumber in indulgence, like the noble youth (of whom I shall soon speak), as to suffer the birth-day of our understanding to be the last day of our lives?

I told you, in a former letter, that I would give you your friend Eusebius's character at large; not, to

be sure, for your information; but to place him in opposition to the men of pleasure: and so:

Facem præferre pudendis, Juv.

that their deformity may be set in a stronger light, for the benefit of those weak eyes, who cannot see a mountain without spectacles; with whom a Centaur passes for a man; or, rather, who think a man of pleasure an extremely happy creature, and, with ancient astronomers, place the Centaur in heaven; their Sagittarius there, or eternal hunter, ever aiming at pleasure, and ever missing his mark: how very much, the character of Eusebius will plainly shew.

Men of pleasure, notwithstanding all the thorns they meet with in their flowery path, imagine all would enter it, but for want of taste, or spirit, or purse. Eusebius wants none of these. He wants not a taste for aught that can gratify either imagination or sense; that can make a coxcomb or debauchee; but he is neither. Nor wants he a purse, or heart, to provide those gratifications. His purse is large: larger his heart; but not corrupt, and nobly wrong. He is young, gay, rich, expensive. So far he is with them; but will leave them soon, as the sun slides from under an eclipse. His riches widen the circle of his virtues. Their riches increase the number of their crimes. There are two kinds of expence: in both, riches make themselves wings and fly away. But widely different in their flight: in one they fly away as an eagle towards heaven; in their flight beautiful, and celestial in their end. In the other, they fly away as an owl to

the desert; ungracious and ill-omened in their flight, and ending in the desert of ignominy and ruin.

Eusebius, though liberal to the demands of nature, rank, and duty; starves vice, caprice, and folly. These (the great cormorants of gold), he sends begging to their doors; they, as old intimates, welcome and embrace them all. And if they have not thrice the fortune of Eusebius, must soon be beggars themselves. While he, with one half they sink in a debauch, lifts beggars (beggars, I mean from fortune, not from folly) into the real comforts of life.

He, too, has his amusement; but not such as deaden, but revive: such as recover the relaxed tone of application; re-animate to new effort; and thus are essential, though pausing, parts of noble, well-judging industry. He starts not at a masquerade; nor thinks cards the books of the devil: but thinks all our diversions like long books, that were better epitomized; or, like the books of the Sibyl, which, as they were lessened in number, rose in their price.

He, as well as they, has his parks, gardens, grottoes, cascades, statues, paintings, &c. but enjoys them more: not because his are better than theirs, but because he is better than they. His paintings have beauties unborrowed from the pencil: and his statues in his eyes appear, like Pygmalion's, to live; though mere marble in theirs. His all-animating joy within gives grace to art, and smiles to nature, invisible to common eyes. Objects of sense and imagination, for the greater power of pleasing, are indebted to the

goodness of his heart. For as the sun is itself the most glorious of objects, and makes all others shine; so virtue itself is the greatest of pleasures, and of all other pleasures redoubles the delight.

He, and they, though they both value riches, yet entertain widely different opinions about them. He considers a great fortune, as his being put, by a kind Providence, into its honourable commission for doing much good. They consider it as a privilege, or at least as an excuse, for the contrary. He, surveying his ample arcades and lofty domes, rejoices more in what benefits others than what aggrandizes himself: rejoices more in considering how many mouths he has fed, than considering how many eyes he has drawn. He triumphs in reflecting to what numbers he has been enabled, by the divine indulgence, to turn, without a miracle, those stones into bread. They, from their huge Babel-like buildings, contract a Babel-like pride, which turns, with regard to those beneath them, their hearts into stone. Such men, in effect, build downward; are the more ignoble, that is, the lower, for their height.

He thinks that Heaven's rich donations imply in them some transfer to the public: they think they imply a transfer of the public homage to themselves. Instead of imagining his grandeur to be a demand on the public for its homage, he looks on it as the public's demand on him for bounty and patronage, of which he has erected such proud promises, and by them raised so just an expectation. He thinks that

their riches (how strangely soever it may sound) run them in debt; and that not to benefit, is, to defraud.

His humility is equal to his magnificence; and as magnificence with humility speaks more regard for others, than himself, it escapes envy, and ensures general applause. Their pride defeats their magnificence, and robs it of that applause which is its single aim; for it is a great authority which tells us, "that "pride is a tree which eats up its own fruit."

He knows (what they consider not), that splendid superiorities cannot be neutral, with regard to the characters of those who possess them; that, therefore, men possess them at their peril; that they must degrade, if they do not exalt them: That Heaven, which, in spite of different ranks, levels happiness, designed it as the peculiar curse of the great (if they deserve it), to be lessened by grandeur, and illustriously disgraced: That, if apes and crocodiles, men hurtful or ridiculous, inhabit superb piles, they must despair of being worshipped; though, but through vain and keen appetite for public incense, they never had been built.

You see in how many points these men fall short of Eusebius in pleasure from expence; which, notwithstanding, is an article on which they pique themselves not a little. And give me leave to subjoin one more particular, which will affect them less than the former, though it ought to affect them most of all; his wealth has subterranean channels; blesses unseen; and costs the relieved neither blushes nor thanks. Not one prison have they opened; not one tear have they

dried, which might speak in their favour, when their own begin to flow. The sorrows we have relieved are the surest support in our own. The best that can be said of their expences, is, that they are an unwilling encomium on those of your friend.

Sensual, of all our pleasures, are the meanest: how low must a soul celestial stoop for them! Yet these our thirsty sponges of sensuality, who suck up every drop of it, in or out of their way, though they take up the dirt with it, prefer to all the rest. And in these, if in any, they will venture to dispute his superiority. But, for reasons, some already mentioned; more, most obvious; he is their superior in these. In pleasures intellectual, how far are they behind him! and then the moral, they are all his own. It is one of their minute and meagre pleasures, professedly to decline them: and these are the supreme. Moral pleasures, though faintly (in this imperfect state), yet truly taste of heaven; and, what is more, ensure that heaven of which they taste. And what an inestimable superiority is *this*! He that can think of death undismayed,

Extremumque diem vitæ inter munera ponit, Lu.

has more enjoyment, even in distress, than they in triumph, with every vain amusement turning reason out of doors, lest it should wound them with one whisper of the grave. On how many melancholy occasions in life should we be glad of an asylum to which to fly? How should we be transported with a

thought that had infallible comfort in it? And that thought can be but one; and that one, it is the constant aim, labour, nay boast, of these wise men to destroy.

Eusebius's love of pleasure is equal to theirs; whence, then, this vast inequality of happiness? He commands his pleasures: some he cultivates; some admits cautiously; others sends blushing away. Their pleasures domineer; scout them away on vile errands; bid them throw their patrimony in the dirt of prostitution or debauch, or dungeon them in midnight dens of fraud and destruction; and command them to whirl it away with a losing card, or stamp it to nothing with a desperate die. What scaffolds of fatal execution are those guilty boards, where moments determine on fortunes for life, and rage and distraction threaten ruin eternal?

From this thraldom to their pleasures, this wretched impotence of heart it is, that while he has but one, and that a most gracious Master, they have as many tyrants as there are follies and vices in the world. Ten times a day they change their Pharaoh; and why? Because his wages are so poor. They have it, indeed, in their power to change their master, but not to break their chain.

The Romans once pretended that they had a golden shield which fell from heaven: to secure it from theft, they laid it up among eleven others made of brass. This expedient had been unnecessary against their wisdom. They run away by choice with the eleven

counterfeits; with a multitude of false, ineffectual pleasures, and leave the celestial, as of no value, to men of less understanding.—Virtue, the delight of Eusebius, is a celestial shield against every evil of human life. Their pleasures are rather swords, that pierce them through with many sorrows.

The contrast how strong! Their pleasures die in fruition, and are remembered with regret. His survive the present actual enjoyment, and are as sweet in retrospect as in hand. Theirs lessen on repetition; his increase: theirs create and aggravate calamities; his avert most, and alleviate the rest: theirs hasten death, and heighten its horror; his owe their perfection to his final hour, after having heightened and lengthened all the blessings of life. And what a wretch is that happiness, and what an idiot that wisdom, that can offer no comfort in the days of darkness and the hours of death? In a word, their wretched joys flourish, like dismal weeping willows watered by a ditch: poor the figure they make; flux and obscene the ground on which they stand: His flourish, like cedars of Libanus, from the fountains of heaven, and are rooted in a rock, the rock of his salvation.

It is this superior ground on which he stands, which imparts that inimitable sweetness of air, aspect, and deportment; which marks him, among multitudes of the gayest, for the gay. They, like things gilt, have much to shew; much more to hide; are all darkness within. He, like a diamond, is transparent,

and shines at heart. He looks as if virtue, according to the wish of some sages, was at last become visible, and shone through him; in person, not precept, making a visit to mankind: and man is mended by looking on him.

Now, please, sir, to observe, to what an astonishing degree that intellectual darkness, mentioned in my former letter, prevails in these men, that would outshine all the world. What is their chief boast? Why this, that "they make the most of this life." Whereas the very fundamental difference between them and Eusebius, is, that they make nothing of this world, because they design to make their all of it. He makes much of this world, because he holds it as little; because, ever having the sentiments, without the terrors, of a death-bed, he never cuts off this life from the thoughts of the next; but sees his whole existence in one unbroken thread extended before him.

But, before I dismiss your friend Eusebius (though he has made you a very long visit), I must take notice of one particular more. These gentlemen pique themselves on their epitome of all virtue and religion, benevolence. If they had it, it would confute most I have said; and make them very happy: for it may stand as a general maxim, that men are happy in proportion to their good-will: nor is it strange, that to the greatest duty, should, by nature, belong the greatest reward. But their title to this virtue is not clear. The reason they so loudly pretend to it,

is, because they know they have it not. The weakest side of a citadel is to be defended most. Eusebius, on his principles, must have universal good-will. Self-love obliges him to it; and his own happy state of mind inclines him the same way: for all are most kind to others, when most easy and pleased with themselves. On their principles, that this world is all, or, at least, all they will concern themselves about; self-love obliges them to the contrary; and their uneasiness in themselves seconds that obligation: so that you may as well expect to find an angel among the dissolute, as a friend. And, indeed, can any expect that they should love them better than their own souls? Yet that would they do, if they cared for them at all.

But, instead of endeavouring to prove what needs no proof, I shall present you with the picture of one of these great lovers of all mankind, if you will promise not to cut his throat; which picture, better than a Demosthenes, will prove my point. You will know whom I mean, when I tell you, that he is enamoured of the charms, and deep in the mysteries, of play. That is, he is so fond of riches (which a good judge * tells us *nemo bonus unquam concupivit*), of riches is he so over fond, that he is quite miserable if denied a daily chance of being stripped to beggary. Greater professions of friendship can no man make, than this arch-promiser: greater proofs of the contrary can no man give. He never did a favour, that

* Sallust.

proved barren to his own designs, but he sent a curse after it. All his kindnesses are artificial flies; if nothing is caught, they are pocketed again. "Hook him, or hang him," is a favourite maxim of his own coining. He smiles, indeed, with great complacency on a crowded levee of devoted friends; with no less than on a hand of good cards. And his hope from both is just the same; that is, so to play them off, as to win his game. That done, if interest or humour bids, he throws them aside as a foul pack, and calls for new, to shuffle, and cheat, and play tricks with, as before. He considers fools as trumps, with which he is sure to win. If there are no fools to be taken in, he makes a pretty good hand of it with a knave of the right suit. If he is so unlucky as not to be blessed with either, he gives out, and, for that time, plays no more: for without a good hand, a bad heart is insupportable. But prosperity sooths remorse, and lays conscience asleep. This is one who knows the world; which generally means, one that knows not God. He never thought of that great, final stake, with regard to which he that honestly but desires it, is sure to win; and he that plays foul the most dexterously, is sure to be undone. Such is Avidienus, such is that good man, who, as freely as eat his meal, could lay down his life for his friend.

But, in excuse for such men, I must own, that, for such as place their all here, there can be no shadow of social happiness, but from deceiving, or being deceived: from deceiving, and so finding some ac-

count in their villany; or from being deceived, and so finding some account in their folly. For real friendship amongst them is impossible: and, indeed, to hope a friend in any man that is not truly his own friend, is absurd. From this account, it is evident, that the chief fountain of happiness is dried up in their hearts.

A wretch, almost smothered with all the reputed means of happiness, would of all objects be the most ridiculous, were it not the most melancholy too. Diogenes went about the city of Athens begging to the statues; being asked the reason, he said he was learning to bear a repulse. These gentlemen should learn the same lesson; no statue can be deafer than most of their pursuits, when they ask real pleasure of them.

These are the men, who, while Providence lays the reins of free-will on their wanton necks, rush headlong into even unimportunate temptations. But when it shall put "its hook in their nose, and its "bridle in their jaws;" when it shall drag them into the condition of your unhappy friend; or worse, when the tattered, convulsed body shall be shaking out an unwilling soul, loth to leave it for a still worse habitation; then, oh! what a change! It places full before me the last hours of that noble youth I mentioned above; last hours full of anguish! how fit to be remembered by those that wish peace to their own! This is the funeral to which, in my first letter, I promised to invite your sister Sempronia and her

gay admirers; Sempronia, who delights *psallere, et cantare, elegantius quam necesse est probæ.* And what invitation more kind than that for which she may thank me for ever, when other entertainments end? If they have their wine, this has its nectar; its cup of salvation, pressed from that vine, "whose leaves heal the nations," and whose swelling clusters teem with eternal bliss. Funeral solemnities are more for the sake of the living than the dead. What a trifle that honour they receive from them, to the benefit we may reap from that affecting scene!

Oh! sir, how affecting! It is still before my eyes. That wretched youth dies again! Again I am smitten with his death. It wounds me even in remembrance: What, then, the scene itself! No words can paint it; no time efface it: I meet it in my dreams; I shall bear it to my grave.

I am about to represent to you the last hours of a person of high birth, and high spirit; of great parts, and strong passions; every way accomplished, nor least in iniquity. His unkind treatment was the death of a most amiable wife; and his great extravagance, in effect, disinherited his only child.

But to my point.—The death-bed of a profligate is next in horror to that abyss, to which it leads. It has the most of hell that is visible on earth. And he that has seen it, has more than faith to confirm him in his creed. I see it now. For who can forget it? Are there in it no flames, and furies?—You know not, then, what a scared imagination can figure, what a

guilty heart can feel. How dismal is it! The two great enemies of soul and body, sickness and sin, sink and confound his friend; silence, and darken the shocking scene. Sickness excludes the light of heaven; and sin, its blessed hope. Oh! double darkness! more than Egyptian! acutely to be felt!

How unlike those illuminated revels of which he was the soul! Did this poor, pallid, scarce animated mass dictate in the cabinet of pleasure; pronounce the fashion; and teach the gayest to be gay? Are these the trophies of his Paphian conquests? these the triumphs to be bought with heaven? Is this he who smote all their hearts with envy at his pre-eminence in guilt? See, how he lies a sad, deserted outcast, on a narrow isthmus between time and eternity! for he is scarce alive: lashed and overwhelmed on one side, by the sense of sin; on the other, by the dread of punishment! beyond the reach of human help, and in despair of divine!

His dissipated fortune, impoverished babe, and murdered wife, lie heavy on him: The ghost of his murdered time (for now no more is left), all stained with folly, and gashed with vice, haunts his distracted thought. Conscience, which long had slept, awakes "like a giant refreshed with wine;" lays waste all his former thoughts and desires; and, like a long-deposed, now victorious prince, on his bleeding heart, imposes, inflicts, its own. Its late soft whispers are thunder in his ears; and all means of grace rejected, exploded, ridiculed, is the bolt that strikes him dead:

dead even to the thoughts of death. In deeper distress, despair of life is forgot. He lies a wretched wreck of man on the shore of eternity, and the next breath he draws, blows him off into ruin.

The greatest profligate is, at least, a momentary saint, at such a sight: for this is a sight which plucks off the mask of folly, strips her of her gay disguise, which glittered in the false lights of this world's mummery, and makes her appear to be folly, to the greatest fool.

How think we then? Is not the death-bed of a profligate the most natural and powerful antidote for the poison of his example? Heals not the bruised scorpion the wound it gave? Intends not Heaven, that, struck with the terrors of such an exit, we should provide comfort for our own? Would not he, who departs obdurate from it, continue adamant, though one rose from the dead? For such a scene partly draws aside the curtain that divides time from futurity; and, in some measure, gives to sight that tremendous, of which we only had the feeble report before.

Is not this then a prime school of wisdom? Are not they obliged, that are invited to this? For what else should reclaim us? The pulpit? We are prejudiced against it. Besides, an agonizing profligate, though silent, out-preaches the most celebrated that the pulpit ever knew: but, if he speaks, his words might instruct the best instructors of mankind. Mixed in the warm converse of life, we think with men; on a death-bed, with God.

But there are two lessons of this school written, as it were, in capitals, which they that run may read. First, He that, in this his minority, this school of discipline, this field of conflict, instead of grasping the weapons of his warfare, is for ever gathering flowers, and catching at butterflies, with his unarmed hand; ever making idle pleasures his pursuit; must pay for it his vast reversion; and, on opening his final account (of which a death-bed breaks the seal), shall find himself a beggar; a beggar past beggary; and shall passionately wish, that his very being were added to the rest of his loss.

Secondly, He shall find, that truth, Divine Truth, however, through life, injured, wounded, suppressed, is insuppressible, victorious, immortal: that, though with mountains overwhelmed, it will, one day, burst out like the fires of Ætna; visible, bright, and tormenting, as the most raging flame:—as now, (oh! my friend!) I shall too plainly prove.

The sad evening before the death of that noble youth, whose last hours suggested these thoughts, I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said:

"You, and the physician, are come too late.—I "have neither life, nor hope. You both aim at mi- "racles. You would raise the dead."

Heaven, I said, was merciful—

"Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has "it not done to bless, and to save me?—I have been

" too strong for Omnipotence! I plucked down " ruin."

I said, The blessed Redeemer—

" Hold! hold! you wound me!—That is the rock " on which I split—I denied his name."

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck. Then with vehemence;

" Oh, Time! Time! It is fit thou shouldst thus " strike thy murderer to the heart.—How art thou " fled for ever!—A month!—Oh, for a single week! " I ask not for years. Though an age were too little " for the much I have to do."

On my saying, We could not do too much: that heaven was a blessed place—

" So much the worse. 'Tis lost! 'Tis lost!—Hea- " ven is to me the severest part of hell."

Soon after, I proposed prayer.

" Pray you that can. I never prayed. I cannot " pray.—Nor need I. Is not heaven on my side al- " ready? It closes with my conscience. Its severest " strokes but second my own."

His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this (who could forbear? I could not), with a most affectionate look, he said:

" Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee. " —Dost weep for me? That's cruel. What can " pain me more?"

Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

"No, stay. Thou still mayst hope.—Therefore "hear me. How madly have I talked? How madly "hast thou listened, and believed? But look on my "present state, as a full answer to thee, and to my-"self. This body is all weakness and pain; but my "soul, as if stung up by torment to greater strength "and spirit, is full powerful to reason, full mighty "to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within "the jaws of mortality, is doubtless immortal.— "And, as for a Deity, nothing less than an Al-"mighty could inflict what I feel."

I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately:

"No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to "speak—My much-injured friend! my soul, as my "body, lies in ruins; in scattered fragments of broken "thought: remorse for the past throws my thought "on the future. Worse dread of the future, strikes "it back on the past. I turn, and turn, and find no "ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, "thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake; "and bless Heaven for the flames:—that is not an "everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire."

How were we struck! Yet, soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out:

"My principles have poisoned my friend; my ex-"travagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness

" has murdered my wife!—And is there another " hell?—Oh! Thou blasphemed, yet most indulgent, " Lord God! hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me " from thy frown."

Soon after, his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot. And ere the sun (which I hope has seen few like him) arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched, Altamont expired.

If this is a man of pleasure, what is a man of pain? How quick, how total, is the transit of these Phaetontiades! In what a dismal gloom they set for ever! How short, alas! the day of their rejoicing! For a moment they glitter, they dazzle. In a moment where are they? Oblivion covers their memories.—Ah! would it did! Infamy snatches them from oblivion. In the long-living annals of infamy their triumphs are recorded. Thy sufferings still bleed in the bosom (poor Altamont!) of the heart-stricken friend. For Altamont had a friend. He might have had many. With what capacities was he endowed, with what advantages, for being greatly good! But with the talents of an angel a man may be a fool. If he judges amiss in the supreme point, judging right in all else but aggravates his folly; as it shews him wrong, though blessed with the best capacity of doing right.

Such, so fatal, when abused, are the greatest blessings of Heaven. Heaven grant his agonies were an expiation of the past; not a presage, and sad speci-

men, of the future.—That his surviving companions and admirers may never suffer the same, give me leave to speak to them, while this affecting object is (or might be) in their sight.

" Ye staunch pursuers of pleasure, opening in full " cry on its burning scent! who run yourselves out of " breath, health, credit, estate, and often life, after " that you cannot catch!—for a moment slacken " your speed, and cool the fervour of your chase. " It is a friend that calls, and he is his own that hears.

" If there is a scene on earth, in which you can find " greater advantage, than in that to which you have " been invited, do not come. If there is not, indulge " me in a few words, which may not be soon forgot: " at least, they will recur to your thought, they will " recur to your feeling hearts, when your present " jovial chase is over; when pleasure is no more.

" It will be grateful to your friend deceased, whom " you were always willing to oblige, if, with his ac- " complishments, you remember his faults; for then " you will not forget your own; but read, in his " deep distress, a strong caution against them. Af- " fords not the rock on which he split, a solid basis " for your safety? Has he not well marked where " mischief lies? See you not the wreck of that gal- " lant first-rate? or, rather, is he not a beacon, " lighted up by kind Providence, to guide you safe " through the dangerous voyage of human life?

" He once, as you now, imagined himself in this " life, immortal. Was he not mistaken? He has

" taken his final flight; whither, who can tell? If you
" continue yours, in the same fatal track, who is he
" that cannot tell where the folly must end? Smit-
" ten, transfixed, when most secure, from the most
" towering heights he dropped, at once, into depths
" of distress, not to be fathomed by man. In gaiety
" of heart defy not the danger. Are there not more
" arrows in the same quiver? and are not you as fair
" and tempting a mark? more tempting, if unad-
" monished, and mounting still over his forgotten
" tomb. And whom dare you attempt? An archer
" that never missed his mark.

" But you, from your gay pavilion, embowered in
" roses, see no threatening prospects; no dangers of
" death.—Oh, sirs! Death delights to lie hid in
" thickets of roses! How often the gayest fall first
" in his snare! Yet even this is too gentle, too mild,
" to answer the good will of Heaven; it cannot keep
" the world in awe.

" What uncommon fortitude is needful to bear
" prosperities unhurt! It is now sunshine with you;
" and you think all is well. It is the season of in-
" dulgence.—But seasons will change. You that
" are now all social comfort, gathered close in glad
" clusters, and (like embodied birds of passage
" bound for new climes) on your impatient wing for
" new delights! what will you do, when each of you,
" severed from the rest, an unexperienced, unex-
" pected, recluse, lies sorely pained; dreading worse;
" none to converse with, but the two greatest stran-

" gers, his own heart, and Him who made it; and " neither at peace with him? Say, ye strangers " to care, and abounders in mirth! what will he " do, when he finds himself still subsisting in a state, " where none of those pleasures, for which alone he " wished to subsist, can possibly any longer subsist " with him? when the dark matter at the centre " will not be more foreign to him, than that which " now beats high in his pulse, and flushes in his " cheek, and stings him on to schemes that laugh " at such lectures as these? when he finds himself " led, by the soft hand of pleasure, to those dismal " gates, which she herself will never, never, never, " enter?

" Consider, my good friends; you still retain the " name of Christians, and have heard of the Scrip- " tures. To speak their language, If Christians are " racers, you have not yet started: if warriors, your " armour is not yet on: if labourers in the vineyard, " you pluck down the vine, and get drunk with the " grapes: if watchmen, your nap is not yet over. " There is no man, but in some part of life, either " stung by self-moved conscience, or alarmed by " some providential event, as out of a long idle " dream, starts, at once, into his senses. The long- " er the dream, the greater his surprise and pain; " and if he nods to the last, the pain and horror (as " too well has been proved) is inexpressible.

" Cannot that awful truth interrupt your slumber? " He sleeps sound indeed, at whose ear a friend's

" knell shall knock in vain. But, setting friendship
" aside; granting, that with men of your cast, a
" friend dead is a friend annihilated; ask, I beseech
" you, pure self-interest one question; " Have you
" no concern in this death? Is it nothing to you?"
" ——Oh! much, very much! It cannot stand neu-
" ter. It is big with good or ill. It must hasten your
" amendment, or heighten your offence. Hence-
" forth, the same crimes are seven-fold guilt!

" Have you never consulted the workings of na-
" ture? Have you never been surprised with a se-
" rious feeling of heart? When I stand, though a
" stranger, on the verge of another's grave; when I
" see the shaken mould take possession of human pride;
" and hear the solemn sound of " Dust to dust;"
" what swelling of soul, but instantly subsides? What
" salutary thoughts, but, at once, it inspires? The
" grave of one unknown, and dying a common death,
" would have this effect: What, then, the grave of a
" friend, and of our own character; and that not
" good; and dying of the follies in which we live;
" and with admonitions in his mouth, and horrors in
" his heart? What heart impregnable to such an as-
" sault? What thunder equal to such a groan? It would
" echo for ever in a penetrable ear. In a penetrable
" heart there would be wrought a mighty change.

" For see you not the mighty force that is implied
" in this mercy? Heaven trusts not to your faith;
" but gives sensible proof of what you have to fear.
" And could it do more? Would a miracle suffice?—

"You have it in a mercy so little deserved. If danger "can alarm you; you, now, are alarmed. If nothing "can alarm you, nothing can save.

"I should grieve to have said too much. Yet, "have I said too much, if my words serve only to "render more inexcusable that imprudence which "they labour to remove. Rather know your dan- "ger, and embrace the plank (though not of cedar), "which I throw out for your escape. Our fondness "for good, shuts our eyes on evil; we scarce allow "it existence before it is felt. But, remember, we "live in a most mutable scene; and have the fear of "to-morrow before your eyes. Not the keenest dis- "cernment can ken through the second of a minute. "To keep within the reach of mercy, is the grand "concern, and supreme blessing of human life.

"My converted! or condemned!
"farewell."

Thus, dear sir, I speak to these gentlemen. I wish they do not rather choose to shew their parts, than their penitence; and criticise my speech, instead of their own conduct. If so, they demonstrate how very great occasion there was of it; though it proves ineffectual.

Most yours.

LETTER IV.

ON PLEASURE.

DEAR SIR,

You seem to think, in your last letter, that our age is so far gone, as to be past recovery. I hope not. Aviola, a consul in the time of Gordian, revived on his funeral pile. I will not despair, but that British virtue, now, like the phœnix, dying in its sweets, may start up from its ashes, and re-assume its former glory. I shall therefore proceed a little farther.

I grant, that the man of pleasure, as well as the good man, has his joy. But their joys are very different. They differ not only in their objects, but their kind: which is as yet a secret to them; and, possibly, to you. Joy from temporals, is a terrestrial joy: and, like all things terrestrial, has a dreg in it. If you observe your own heart, you will find, that joy from temporals has ever somewhat of a gay inquietude, a disturbed and tumultuous delight; like some liquors, all in unquiet ferment and confusion, while they sparkle and smile. Joy from eternals,—joy, I mean, on spiritual accounts, (viz.) *mens con-*

scia recti; or, a delightful hope of immortality; or an humble persuasion of divine favour, &c.—this joy is celestial, and, like a fine calm summer's evening, is undisturbed, placid, and serene. The first is a passion, and that in the strictest sense; we suffer from it, as well as enjoy. Nay, some have suffered from it even to death. The latter seems rather to be, or to resemble, an inspiration, in which the divine cause takes away, or supersedes, our human infirmity; therefore, by our Church, most properly styled "the peace of God." Nor let Centaurs imagine, that this peace is occasioned by the smallness of the joy. No, "It passeth all understanding;" and is, strictly speaking, a specimen, an actual part, of heaven.

For, indeed, the supreme happiness and misery of rational beings, through all variation of circumstances, and through every period of their existence, is of a piece, or of the same kind; though, perhaps, in no two periods of it of the same proportion or degree. Therefore, heaven and hell, how distant soever some think them, are really, though not fully, on earth. Wherever, and whenever, their causes, that is, virtue and vice, exist, they will exist, in a measure correspondent to them. What then are the good and bad, but the wretched and happy? He, whose soul reposes on his firm trust in God, like the halcyon that builds on the waves, if storms arise, may be tossed, but not endangered. Or, grant the worst, those tumultuous billows that devour others, rock him to rest eternal.

When the good man lies down to rest, no fears from the dangers of the night break through his strong confidence in the divine protection. When he awakes, his first thought lays hold on heaven; which gives through the consecrated day, such a sweetness of aspect and deportment, such a force and firmness to his felicity; that we may venture almost to say, "He cometh forth as a bridegroom "from his chamber, and rejoiceth, as a giant, to run "his course."

The man of pleasure has his little clouds at the brightest; the course of his happiness is retarded by a straw; and any considerable, scarce considerable, accident puts it quite to death. Not only the necessaries or conveniencies, but the decorations and superfluities of life, are vital to his sickly felicity. In any of them he may receive a deep or deadly wound. Whereas they are mere excrescences to the good man's happiness; and he has no more feeling in them than in his hair, or his nail. Nay, his happiness is of so strong a constitution, that it can stand real calamities unhurt: nor quits its serenity on the confines of the grave; which the man of pleasure but ill retains in the sunshine of life.

Of which strange inferiority one cause is very obvious. When all our hopes and fears are confined within this narrow scene, what an insupportable importance, what a tyranny over our passions, does this give it? what demi-gods does it make our superiors, who can bestow what we most value? We tremble

before them. What mountains does it make of little things, because the greatest in our inventory? We turn pale, sometimes die, at their loss. But, the first moment we take God for our protector, and his precious promises for our chief portion, our superiors, even kings, shrink to men, and crowns imperial lose their lustre. Little things are little, and leave our hearts at rest. As a taper to the sun, such the sun to the "glories that shall be revealed." Looking to the close of the drama, we resume our native dignity; nor are longer overawed on the stage by our fellows; or, perhaps, our inferiors behind the scene; nay, sometimes, on it too; when, like poor Altamont, they are forced to change their plume for the warm cap of sickness, and are unbuttoning their buskins on the bed of anguish, terror, and death.

And must this, one day, be the case? after having run the gauntlet of disappointing, painful pleasures, and, for some years, being afflicted with delights; to drop unregarded, unlamented, infamous, into punishment far greater for the punishment they have already undergone.——Of human happiness what a dismal account is this! Yet this is true. Let us, therefore, enquire if it is not worse than they deserve.

Our men of pleasure affect much being men of honour too; that is, they are as proud as they are dissolute: or, in other words, they will not stoop to mean and little vices; they deal only in great. They scorn to pick a pocket; but triumph in cutting a

throat. If their immaculate honour is violated by word, look, or thought, then they trample all the laws of religion, justice, and humanity, without remorse. My enquiry will join the man of honour and the man of pleasure together. But how shall I enquire? How shall I know the heart of these men? and that only can inform me right. Let us then consider what these men's prayer would be, if they prayed at all. For what is a prayer, but addressing to some superior power the real desires of our hearts?

Thus, then, I will shew you an exact picture of their hearts. There was so masterly a copy of a capital picture of Julio Romano, taken by one of his scholars, that he swore it was his own original drawing. I hope so to copy their hearts, that they shall imagine, that it is not I, but they themselves, that speak. The desires of their hearts, if clothed in words, would run to the following purpose.—But, first, this caution: Let not that offend pious ears, which passes in an impious heart; and which, for the sake of piety (though, perhaps, not without some shock to it), is drawn out into light.

THE PROFLIGATE'S PRAYER.

"O Thou! whose omnipotence is but a second at-
"tribute, an able servant to thy delight; thou great
"fountain of pleasure! as such I adore thee. Plea-
"sure alone makes me devout; and let devotion
"advance my pleasure. For I am not more devout,

" than modest; I ask not, yet, for heaven. Give me " my heaven on earth. Let Mahomet's paradise de- " scend, and bless me on this side the grave. Let " my honour too shine before men; and let none " see my heart,—but Thee. *Noctem peccatis, et* " *fraudibus objice nubem.* Give my lusts a long and " prosperous reign over me; and let not religion ap- " proach to hurt me. Lead me into temptation, " and give me strength to comply with it; and de- " liver me from all evil, that may mar my delights. " Let me be (as I have been) a brute while I live, " and an angel (if angels there are) when I die."

Is the good man shocked at this? Yes; and the profligate too. Few know the foulness of their own hearts. A famous modern, when, in an age he had lost his understanding, passing by a looking-glass, cried out in compassion, " Poor old man!" not knowing it to be himself. Thus the profligate, at sight of this mirror, equally ignorant, no doubt will cry out in surprise, " Horrid wretch!" I answer, therefore, to the question above, viz. " Is it not worse than they deserve?"—that men of pleasure, themselves being judges, deserve the worst.

In contrast to this (and sure it wants an antidote), accept that piece of devotion you desired on your friend's account; and may it prove of some little service to him!

DEVOUT THOUGHTS OF THE RETIRED PENITENT.

"Yes, blessed, ever blessed be the divine indul-
"gence for this. How wanted, how welcome, this
"asylum! this recess! Here earth holds its peace;
"and heaven's voice can be heard; heaven's voice,
"if we listen, ever speaking in the human heart.
"Here let me commune with my so long anxious
"heart; which has frequently called on me for an
"audience, and found me pre-engaged; or else
"the rude world broke in on our conference, and
"fatally pushed it off till a farther day; though,
"(shocking to consider!) though a depending eter-
"nity often chid my delay.

"While the noise of the world beats its drum in
"our ears, and its bustle and hurry throws its dust
"in our eyes; who can hear the soft whispers of
"conscience, or read the strong demands of reason,
"though written in capitals on the composed and
"disenchanted heart? I now read, hear, and trem-
"ble. I tremble at that, in which I once triumphed.
"I blush at that, of which I once was vain. Oh,
"pleasure! pleasure! what art thou? The death of
"reason. And with reason dies the whole heaven,
"as well as character, of man.

"The cloud now a little broken, which wrapped
"me up in night, look round, my soul enlarged; and
"say, where, or what am I? An immensity around
"me! an eternity before me! a shadow, my plea-
"sure! a moment, my time! a vapour, my life!
"And shall a moment, shade, vapour, engage all

" my love? engross all my thought? Shall it bid an " angel from heaven wait my better leisure? bid the " great Father of angels defer his call till to-mor- " row? What, O my soul! if He should call no " more? Good God! if He should call no more! if " He should leave thee to thyself!—Where, then, is " hope? Where, then, is man?

" Man, desperate man, the first moment he sets up " for himself, and, impatient of control, takes the " rein into his own mad hands; the first moment he " is at liberty, he is the greatest of slaves. How " shackled! how harassed! how starved! In the " midst of his riots, what a famine of joy! None " can be wise for time, that are fools for eternity. " Dreadful independence! the first moment man " quits hold of his Creator, he drops! In distraction " and ruin, how unfathomed his fall!

" Out of that deep, I call unto thee, O Lord! " Lord, hear my voice. Dissolve the charm that " ties me down to delights trifling, terrestrial, infer- " nal; and give me wings to rise into day, and reach " the things that belong to my peace. Where *is* " the creature which Thou hast made? Where is " the heart which Thou hast given? This sink of " pollution! this nest of all vices! it could not come " from Thee. No, I have snatched it out of thy " blessed hand, and let it fall in the mire. What is " it to me, that "thy mercy is over all thy works," " since I am not what Thou hast made?

" I have slept on a precipice, and dreamt I was in

" heaven: slept on its very brink; though ven-
" geance frowned over me, and flames roared be-
" neath. What horrors awake me! What a gulf
" lies before me! What mercy has saved me! Where
" had I been, had I died yesterday? Oh, let this
" load, this mountainous load, on my heart, sink me
" lower, and lower still, in adoration that I live!
" Had I felt these pangs before,—before I had been
" reclaimed.—Thou, that bearest up the pillars of
" the earth, support my spirits!—Where had I been,
" if yesterday had been my last? Where—oh where?
" —And eternal too!—Eternal!—O Lord God Al-
" mighty! could thy thunder shake me more?

" Thou glorious God, who makest the thunder!
" let me climb above creation; and soar into thoughts
" of Thee.—How I wander up and down, bewildered
" and benighted, through the boundless of such a con-
" templation! Where, what, who, how, art Thou?
" Source of all beings! Centre of all good! Great
" Ancient of days! before the birth of time! beyond
" the comprehension of angels! Filler of immensity!
" who lookest down on the highest; and the lowest
" dost support?—support even me.

" Support me while I labour at some idea of my
" God—but I labour in vain. Thou most obvious,
" and most occult! most present, and most absent of
" beings! how much of Thee is enjoyed? How little
" of Thee is known? I am in Thee, yet cannot find
" Thee. I can neither go from Thee, nor to Thee.
" Clouds and thick darkness are thy pavilion! Won-

" ders passing wonders, through the moment of time " and the immense of eternity, guard and aggran- " dize thy tremendous throne!

" Before such a Judge, O my soul! art thou to " plead thy cause; to pour out thy deep sorrows, " and deeper sins; to tremble out thy complaint? " Oh! let me annihilate myself before Him. Nor " wretch, nor man, nor angel, is any thing in His " sight, till he is nothing in his own. Who, Lord! " ever thought on Thee, and was not confounded? " And give me leave to add, Who, Lord! ever prayed " to Thee (as he ought), and was not blessed? For " which infinite mercy, from the first thrones in hea- " ven, to the meanest worm on earth, be payed all " homage, praise, and adoration; constant, pro- " found, ardent, and eternal!"

PART II.

" Are they that pray, blessed?—But what is that " to me? Dare I to pray? To whom is prayer ad- " dressed? Oh! how dreadful in majesty! more " dreadful in vengeance! dreadful to the blessed " above! more dreadful to man! more still to the " sinner! what then to the deepest in sin? May not " I then say (as is said, Lord God Almighty, of thy " blessed Self), 'Hell is open before me; destruc- " tion hath no covering?' Where then shall I fly? I " cannot fly from thy presence. I dare not stand in " it. Should I sink to the centre, I am still in thy " sight. Even darkness detects me! even flight

" brings me nigh! Oh! Thou that dost light the " sun as a taper, or tread it out as a spark! why " still in being, a wretch ever destined to pain? Oh! " let me be nothing; or, let me be Thine.

" And what a nothing, indeed, am I? What a no- " thing, compared, is man?—Thou that inhabitest " eternity! my foundation is in the dust. Lord most " holy! I was conceived in sin. God most mighty! " what weaker than man? Great! holy! mighty! " three Persons, and one God! Creator! Redeem- " er! Sanctifier! three Benefactors, and one Being! " with what indignation dost Thou behold a wretch " of such complicated guilt? a sinner to Thee, to the " public, and himself?

" And dare I then approach? The presumption " how great!—But greater to forbear. To sin is " bad: to despair is fatal. Oh! most merciful " Jesus! what refuge but in thee! Yet dare I not " meet thy face: I come trembling behind Thee. " If I touch but the hem of thy garment, I shall be " whole. Even dogs may eat of the crumbs that " fall from their master's table.—For that bountiful " grant, what adoration is due! With prostration " profound I cannot but adore.—What adoration is " equal? I cannot adore aright. Or could I; I am " unworthy to lift an eye to thy throne. My in- " cense has no odour; my anthem no praise.

" But thou, Lord, wide as the arch of heaven, " dost extend thy compassionate arms to receive a " returning world. As the sands of the sea are thy

" mercies, and (with horror let me speak it) my trans-
" gressions. I have looked on an unfeeling heart,
" as a quiet conscience: on a multitude of sinners,
" as an apology for sin: and on the fashion of the
" world, as a repeal of thy laws. I have been thank-
" less, for what Thou hast most bountifully given:
" senseless of what Thou hast most bountifully pro-
" mised: provoking, under the greatest obligations:
" peevish and impatient, under the smallest evils:
" riotous under thy judgments; and by thy bless-
" ings, most unblessed: I turned them into poison;
" and by my prosperity was undone.

" I have studied iniquity as a science; being vain
" of distinction in it, and ashamed of my duty. I
" have blushed at the glance of a man, and a man
" most mistaken; and set my face as a flint against
" reason, and against Thee. I have even borrowed
" infidel scraps for the credit of the day; and run
" in debt for destruction. Time given for repent-
" ance, I turned over to folly; and made the di-
" vine mercy a promoter of sin. Nay, I have sin-
" ned even beyond my power. What schemes have
" I laid, which thy goodness disappointed? How
" many crimes have I committed, which never came
" to pass?

" With such overflowing of ungodliness I quenched
" thy blessed Spirit; I have trod, with thy divine
" laws, thy precious blood, under foot. All this,
" Lord! thou knowest; and yet I still live: all
" this, thou hast seen; and yet hast thou held thy

" peace. Thou hast shortened thine arm; and curb-
" ed vengeance in air; though called for (if daring
" can call for thy vengeance) to fall on my head.

" How long, Lord! hast thou forborne me?
" And forborne when thine arrows went abroad:
" though I stood in the first rank of offenders; nor
" ever lifted up the shield of devotion; quite naked
" in sin. My less vicious companions fell frequent
" around me; and dismal was their fall. I washed
" off its memory in the next welcome debauch; and
" the just cause of remorse but redoubled my guilt.
" By admonitions unadmonished, by thy mercies un-
" softened, by my own sentiments unawed, by my
" own conviction unconvinced, I censured their con-
" duct, and trod on in their steps. I deplored their
" sad exit, and posted on to my own: because spared,
" when most obnoxious, I thought myself immortal.
" In every path of pleasure, in every flight of ambi-
" tion, what gay, sanguine, multitudes of those born
" after me, and in every promise of life to be placed
" before me, have I seen rise, bloom, triumph, lan-
" guish, decay, and die? What a mystery of mercy
" is this! and what a miracle of madness am I!
" Amid this mighty field of slaughter am I still
" alive?—While I doubt if I still live, I live on my
" crimes. Nay, my very repentance increases the
" number: repentance so languid; so far short of
" my guilt!

PART III.

"Lord! from that stupendous height, towards "which the cherubim lift up an eye in vain, bow "down thine ear, and hear.—O Lord! hear me not. "For what have I to plead? what excuse to cover, "what palliation to soften, my guilt? Can my con- "fession of sin weigh aught in my favour? I fear, not "a grain: for wherefore have I confessed my trans- "gressions? because I could not conceal them. "Thou knowest even those that are unknown to "myself. But then, Lord! I have been tempted.— "Yes, and I have courted temptation. Frail nature "has seduced me.—And have I not indulged my "seducer? Public example bore hard on me.—And "I rejoiced in that excuse. I have sinned with my "fathers.—True, but I have sinned beyond them. "What age for indulgence has so loosened the rein? "And who, in such an age, has rushed farther in ill "than the wretch at thy feet?

"But is there nothing in counterbalance? no "dawnings of good? no pretensions, at least, to vir- "tue, to lighten the loaded scale? Yes; *I* have been "an advocate for virtue—That I might remove all "obstructions in vice. I have gone to thy temple— "But left my heart behind. Nay, I have prayed— "But wished not what I asked. I have aimed at "humility—Out of pride. I have given—But with- "out charity. I have been kind, the very kindest of "men—To gain power of being cruel, as the most

" malignant of foes. My devotion to Thee has been " absolutely declined; yet never have I repented, " but of omissions in guilt; nor ever had a darling " joy, but what is the parent of my present grief.

" On searching my own heart, that abyss of cor- " ruption, I find there is hardly a virtue which my " hypocrisy has not worn as a mask; hardly a vice " which my presumption has not acted under it: by " these abandoned means bringing into discredit vir- " tue of others the most sincere; and making more " heinous my own deepest guilt: to the public a " scarce less pernicious pest, than a fatal assassin to " myself. Thus, Lord! all my pleas but inflame my " indictment; and seeking excuses, but discovers " new crimes.

" But, as I discover new crimes in myself by my " own awakened reflection; by the gift of thy grace, " I discover new goodness, new glories, new wonders, " in Thee. I have lived in darkness, in the shadows " of eternal death. I wrapped myself up in the " world; I saw nothing, but what had been better " unseen, what made me blind to Thee. But now " thy divine attributes break in upon me like the " morning, and awake me to thy presence. I see " Thee in every thing. And seeing, I adore. And " adoring, tremble.

" Thine attributes, at once, all lighten upon me; " and strike me, like him of Tarsus, thy less perse- " cuting foe; they strike me to the dust. Thy most " awful omnipresence; thy most incomprehensible

" glory; thy most unbounded wisdom; exquisite
" justice; and ineffable goodness! Goodness, how
" ineffable! And to me, Lord! to me unsupportable:
" that chief cause of my confusion! severe up-
" braider of my conduct! and terrible aggravation
" of my guilt! If thy goodness thus pains me; what
" then will thy vengeance? When thy vengeance
" awakes, (cover me, O ye mountains!) when thy
" vengeance awakes——Oh! mercy! mercy! mercy!
" —Thou mighty to save! oh! have mercy upon me.
" And mercy thou wilt have, thou Father of all
" mercies! of mercy, redundant, inexhaustible source!
" Thou wilt not condemn him, who condemns him-
" self: who trembles at his own tribunal: who is
" scarce struck with more horror at vengeance, than
" at guilt;—at such guilt! and to such a Master!
" whose bounties enabled me so signally to sin; and
" who, my sin so provoking, so long overlooked.
" But I repent. Lord! I repent—Yet how dry
" are these eyes? how hard is this heart? Strike thou
" the rock, and the waters flow. Let not him, who
" groans under his transgressions, groan under thy
" displeasure. Thou giver, guider, lover, yea, buyer,
" of souls! and, at what a price? who dost hear the
" very thoughts of the wounded at heart! Hear, pity,
" spare! Nor let the Lord be angry, if I presume
" to add—Oh! spare thy paternal tenderness, oh
" save it from its aversion, its 'strange work.'
" Vengeance is an alien to thy most amiable nature.
" Ruin is a subversion of thy most glorious scheme.

" Though common sense has deserted me, and a " legion possessed me; though I have contradicted " my own reason, and fought my own heart, which " stood in defence of thy laws; though I have strug- " gled hard for madness, and taken ruin by force; " yet let not compassion be quite a stranger in heaven. " Let not thine anger burn for ever. Wherefore is " the Lord angry, because I am a sinner? What else " canst thou forgive? Because my sin is great? If " pardoned, the greater the glory. Thy servant is " wicked; but still a servant. Thy son a prodigal; " but still a son. Though a son's duty has been " wanting in me; lose not, Thou boundless love! all " the bowels of a father. Am I not the work of " thy hand? Do not despise it. An image of thy " majesty? Do not blot it out. The price of thy " blood? Oh! cast it not away. Shall things in- " compatible combine to my destruction? Can I be " related to ruin and to Thee? Let it be thy blessed " pleasure to reclaim, not to destroy me. If destroyed, " thy foe will triumph; if reclaimed, there is joy in " heaven; and ten times ten thousand will sing praise " round thy throne.

PART IV.

" But if I am pardoned, who then can be punished? " What stains can condemn, if an Æthiop escapes? " The regions of darkness are part of thy creation; " and horrors infernal were not made in vain. My

" crimes, in themselves, how great! as committed in " defiance of infinite majesty, they are greater still. " What then shall I say? To what shadow of excuse " shall I fly?—Pardon, Lord, the weakness of my " reason, if I judge, or rather hope, amiss: thine in- " finite majesty seems to plead for me. Fain would " I find an advocate in that; in that very cause " which most heightens my guilt.

" For what, my Lord, am I? A poor complex of " littleness and vanity; the very centre of infirmi- " ties; a combination of all causes, that can call for " thy compassion: frail flesh, and fleeting spirit! a " moth! a worm! a flower of the field! to-day, and " not to-morrow! at morning, and not at night! not " master of a moment; not a match for a breeze! a " dream! a vapour! a shadow! a thing of nought! " posting through daily doubt and danger, toil and " trouble, into trodden dust and ashes!

" Such am I! such was I made!—and made by " Thee: and now, Lord, wilt thou make bare an arm " almighty against me? wilt thou lift up a bolt that " can crush creation, against its meanest worm? " (oh! pardon what distress compels me to plead) " thine infinite majesty declares against it: that " rescues the sinner, though it enhances the sin. " Does not my meanness disarm thy might? Is not " the greatness of the offended, the offender's de- " fence? I am, indeed, unworthy, most unworthy, " thy favour: but am I not unworthy thy resentment " too? Thou that sittest on the highest heavens, and

" seest worlds infinite dance beneath thee, as atoms " in the sun!—wilt thou, oh! wilt thou not remem- " ber that I am but dust?

" Yes, Lord! thou wilt remember it: thou wilt " remember thy glorious Self: what ancient days re- " sound; what wonders love divine has wrought of " old. For to whom do I cry? Art thou not He, to " whom none ever cried in vain? who created not, " but to bless; commands not, but to preserve; nor " punishes, but to reclaim? who has not more re- " lieved, than amazed, with his extremities of love? " for art thou not the same Lord, who, though most " offended, as if thou wert the offender, *beseeches us* " to be reconciled? who mourns over the impeni- " tent, and over the impenitent for sins against him- " self? and when his sorrow cannot prevail, even " weeps in their stead? those tears obdurate Jerusa- " lem would not shed, didst thou not take to thy " own blessed lids, which overflowed at the bare " prospect of its ruin? Who, without pious terror, " without the greatest astonishment, can think on " these things? or, who, without comfort, still greater " than that?

" Nor end our healing hopes of comfort here: " not only to beseech, commiserate, and weep, de- " scended the Lord of Glory, and Eternal Life, but " to die. And what a death! And after what a life! " a life of compassions without number, and beyond " measure: What a shining progress, what a stupen- " dous ascent in love! He meets the returning pro-

" digal; looks compassion on denying Peter; rejects " not disbelieving Thomas; admits sinful Magda- " len; pardons the taken adulteress; and associates " to himself in Paradise (where angels cast their " crowns at his feet), a thief from the cross. What a " marvellous and most adorable climax is this? And " is it possible for love to rise higher still? Oh! let " it rise higher, and reach even me.

" What am I, thou most exuberant fountain of " love! that I should set a bound to such compassion " as this? Can ocean be repelled by a single grain " on the shore? What a triumph of mercy, to pluck " the ruined from the ruin! What an omnipotent " action, to save the most lost! Though pleasure has " fooled me; though reason, conscience, heaven, nay " and earth too, in one scale, has been outweighed " by a feather in the other; though, with Esau, I " sold my birth-right for nothing; yet, Lord! let " these distractions of thought, these convulsions of " heart, these pangs of the wretch, if not the prayer " of the penitent, reach the foot of thy throne: for " His dear sake who spared not his most precious " blood; oh! spare, pardon, bless; yes, bless me, " even me, O my Father! Yes, Thou all-surround- " ing, all-pervading, all-sustaining, and all-blessing " Majesty of heaven! bless me, even me, O my " God!

" Thou! who if thou movest thy lip, it thunders; " if thou liftest thine eye, the sun is dark; who hast " thy way in the whirlwind, and walkest on the

" wings of the wind; who sittest above the heavens,
" and hidest thy footsteps in the great deep! but
" (above all), whose superabundant effluence, whose
" ocean of love, overflows the whole creation! add
" to these wonders one wonder more—the forgive-
" ness of guilt like mine: hear the suppliant voice,
" see the bleeding bosom, these throes, these throbs
" of the most vile and abandoned—but most repent-
" ant and heart-broken, of men.

" Then, Lord! come the worst, I will not com-
" plain. My joy shall burst its way through the
" frowns of the world, and the shadows of death.
" Then—' Blessing, and honour, and glory, and
" power be to Him who sitteth on the throne, and
" to the Lamb,' who nails sin to his cross!—Thus will
" I sing in spite of my groans! Thus will I sing
" with my last expiring breath! Thus will I sing
" for ever and ever.

" Amen. O my soul! Amen, Amen."

This, sir, is that importunate, ardent, persevering spirit of address, which was suitable to the state of the person from whom I borrowed it. It may possibly (partly at least) suit some others. And I thought it inhuman to gaze, so long as I have done, on the disease, without aiming at some expedient to mitigate its malignity. There is a sovereign balm in prayer.

I know, sir, there are certain quietists in devotion, saints of great repose in prayer, who may censure this, as too warm. But, when should we be warm, if

not when our eternity is at stake? Shall we be warm in our vices, and cool in our repentance? Were our passions given for nothing? or given only as the servants of sin? Is it not heaven, but its reverse, that is to be taken by violence? I, therefore, drop this dispute, not only as unchristian, but undeistical too: for, if there is a God, all our affections are too feeble, all the wings of our soul are too few, to be put forth in pursuit of his favour; and being languid in devotion, is, being solemnly undevout. If there is a God, he gave us our passions, as well as our reason: they, therefore, as well as reason, should assist in his service. And, indeed, reason without them, though it may loudly tell, will but lamely perform our duty. How great a part of the Scripture must these men's kind of criticism explode? Poor David must break his harp, lest it give offence. Even angels have their passions; nor are any beings exempt from the need of them on this side the throne of God. Whatever exemption some may fancy in their own favour, let us, my friend, who have seen the necessity of devotion for others, not neglect our own; nor, in the pride of instructing, lose the prudence of safety.

You and I, my friend, lie under two disadvantages in this point; the world's example, and our own years. It is an undevout age: and will you not be surprised to hear me say, that ours is an undevout period of life?—Yet it is most certain, that there is a tenderness of heart, and a susceptibility of awe, with regard to God as well as man, in youth, which,

in most, is wanting afterwards. This want is an enemy we must fight; and fervent prayer, that "sword of "the Spirit," is the best weapon against him. Prayer, because the most easy of duties, seems, with many, the hardest to be performed. It costs them so little pains, they think they may as well let it alone. Whereas, it is the supreme, the great, mother-duty: all other duties and virtues are its progeny; are brought forth, nursed, nourished, and sustained by it. Devotion is the sole asylum of human frailty, and sole support of heavenly perfection: it is the golden chain of union between heaven and earth; keeps open the blessed communication:

—— Geminique facit commercia regni. CLAUD.

He that has never prayed, can never conceive, and he that has prayed as he ought, can never forget, how much is to be gained by prayer.

Dear sir,

Yours.

LETTER V.

LIFE'S REVIEW.

THE GENERAL CAUSE OF SECURITY IN SIN.

THOUGHTS FOR AGE.

LIFE'S REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,

In this and the following letters I shall touch on five points :—Life's Review: The General Cause of Security in Sin : Thoughts for Age: The Dignity of Man: The Centaur's Restoration to Humanity.—The three first are naturally suggested to me, by the world's wickedness, and our own ; and our advanced time of life. The fourth, viz. The Dignity of Man, is naturally suggested by the notoriety of its reverse in those for whose sake these letters are principally written : for who can look on Lucifer in his abyss, without thinking of that height from which he fell ? by which alone we can take any just measure of his calamity. And the fifth point, viz. The Centaur's Restoration to Humanity, is forcibly imposed on me by the transporting thought that such an event is possible. Yet should it take place, posterity will scarce believe it :

Annalium nostorum laboravit fides. L. Flo.

I begin with The Review of Life; and that, though chiefly for our own sakes, yet also for the sake of all our grey-headed boys, as Sudbury, Torrismond, Ironside, &c. for though beasts of so gross a class as they choose to rank with, scarce deserve to be brought to the manege, yet pupils not yet expelled the school of life, ought still, if possible, to be taught the lesson they have so long neglected; and I offer myself gladly for their tutor; though I fear they would prefer a *tetanothrum* * to an *apotheosis*. Their erudition will not leave them at a loss to know what I mean.

There is nothing of which men are more liberal than their good advice, be their stock of it ever so small; because it seems to carry in it an intimation of our own influence, importance, or worth. We (for you approved it; we, I say), have bestowed abundance of it on our Centaurs, which, I fear, will bring us in but little thanks. Let us, therefore, return from abroad, come to ourselves, and see if our export of wisdom may not be wanted at home. We have censured the aged, are we not such ourselves? Is there no folly to be found, but at assemblies and masquerades? Or is folly not folly, because it hits our own taste? Let us lay the line to our own conduct. Let us drop foreign ware, and put ourselves into the scale.

Yes, my friend, let us make a short visit to our former selves. They are, indeed, great strangers;

* A medicine to take out wrinkles.

nor much to be liked: yet it is a visit all should make who wish well to the future of life. A review of life is an employment agreeable but to few; because none can look back without self-condemnation; and none will look forward but with self-flattery. But though the task may be bitter, it is wholesome too. Ask you, "What advantage from it?"—It is the only way of taking my Centaur's* advice, and knowing ourselves. A man can see himself in retrospection only. When warm in action, he is ever looking on something else; on his point in view: or, if he could see himself, he could not judge aright, either of himself or others. While warm in action, prejudices and passions, excited by the then present objects and incidents, corrupt his judgment. But in a cool review, he becomes rather a bystander than the party; and is patient of truth. His then former rivals are no longer rivals; therefore he judges better of men. His former points of view are no longer points of view; therefore he judges better of things. He can judge, nay he cannot but judge, as impartially of himself as of the rest of mankind.

Wisdom is the growth of experience: but experience is not the growth of action, but of reflection on it. In an active life is sown the seed of wisdom: but he who reflects not, never reaps; has no harvest from it; but carries the burden of age, without the wages of experience; nor knows himself old, but

* In the frontispiece.

from his infirmities, the parish register, and the contempt of mankind. And what has age, if it has not esteem?—It has nothing.

Starting, my friend, from the same goal, through different paths, which severed our fortune, not our affections, we have run our race; and now approach its end. Jaded with our long journey, the spur of ambition blunted, and our spirits off their speed, we are glad of rest. In which, reflection on the past is not only useful, but extremely natural. Look on the stormy sea, whose billows reach the clouds; then on the peaceful lake, where the feather or fallen leaf lies unmoved; and you see the difference between the cool evening, and warm meridian of man. Reflection is as natural to one, as action to the other. Unactive youth, and unreflecting age, are equal blanks in the book of life. Man varies no less than those varying insects at which he wonders. In his morning he crawls: long ere noon, flutters, and flies: at evening, chilled into languor, he creeps into corners, lies hid, and sleeps; or, if awake, having but little ground before him, nor that the best, How naturally he looks back on the past? How naturally his winter's evening calls for its tale? And to self-love, what tale so natural as our own? How idle soever our tale has been, if we can draw some moral from it, that will abate its insignificance, and give it some little weight by making us wiser for the future.

And want we not to be wiser? On how many fruitless friendships, ill-judged enmities, rash pre-

sumptions, cowardly despairs, unmanly flatteries, bold indecencies, idle schemes, airy hopes, groundless fears, opportunities lost, admonitions slighted, escapes unacknowledged, evils improved, blessings neglected, and trifles admired; on what a swarm of infirmities I look back with shame! How ambitious have we been in our attachments; not aware that all, most worth our ambition, we can give ourselves! How fearful of expenses not aware; that, till it escapes the gripe, and takes its flight into some prudent use, money is not wealth; that it truly becomes ours only by our parting with it! How fond have we been of applause; not aware that human, separate from superior, applause, is the greatest vanity, as well as the most common pursuit, in life! How plainly I now see, that few things are more pernicious than too keen an appetite for applause, except a bold defiance of just reproach! That makes coxcombs; this, felons: this calls for detestation; that, for contempt.

How plainly do I now see, that our ignorance has been great! How often have we been so idle as to complain of our wants; that is, of our capacity of being happy! for, without wants, there would be no desires; and, without desires, no gratification of them; and without gratification of desire, no happiness; for human happiness, nay happiness of all created beings, consists in nothing else.

What on retrospect appears to me to be the capital weakness of man, is, that strange ascendant which his wishes have over his understanding:—it is this makes

a Centaur. How often have we looked on our wishes as infallible arguments for the certainty of what we desired; when others saw it was an impossible point! And of this capital weakness, a capital instance is, that dying men can scarce believe that they shall die. Are we not now as those yellow autumn leaves, which the first blast sweeps away? Yet we seem to think the green bud hardly more tenacious of the stem.

On further review, this is stranger still: Our friends are our strongest ties to life: when these are cut, what but folly can renew the charm? What re-engage our disenchanted hearts? And what, in my retrospect, is an object more obvious or striking, than yonder ensigns of death? How the tyrant triumphs! What numerous monuments rise over the cold bosoms that once warmly received us; that shared our counsels, our ambitions, our pleasures, and our hearts! Their epitaphs collected would make a volume:—a volume how instructive, if read aright! A friend's monument is a friend's legacy; and a richer to the considerate, than any parchment can convey. What, for the most part, is human wisdom, but the melancholy growth of a bleeding heart? The thought of death is the directing helm of life; and he bespeaks a wreck, who lays it aside.

O my friend! how rapid the human march! Men are in haste; how they hurry over the stage! Where are those luminaries in every various walk of fame, in every kind of excellence and renown, who most fired our ambition, and provoked our envy? Are they not

passed away as April shadows over the field; or, by the fire-side, a winter's tale? Are not those far-seen, shining lights gone out apace after one another, as little sparks in the fired leaf or paper, leaving us nothing but ashes behind? And in their ashes is there nothing to be found but sorrow? May we not light on a little prudence in them?

Sorrow, indeed, predominates. Oh, recent wound! Sorrow how just! Whom lost we the very last moon? —Lost *we!* That is vainly said: whom lost the public? whom the whole nation? Few have left it more worthy all love and esteem, than our friend deceased.* He was made by nature to be beloved; and entitled by virtue to be admired:

> —— Quem semper amatum,
> Semper honoratum, sic Dii voluistis, habebo. VIRG.

Well had it been, if we, like him, had sought esteem; but we would not pay the price. Love, we thought, would come cheaper; and seeking that, were in danger of losing both. The wise world will part with nothing, but by force. Love cannot be compelled; esteem may. And, when it is, we lay in it, at the same time, the surest foundation for lasting love.

My retrospect shews me a transitory love, of which we have been too fond; a love often bestowed by great ones, on those whom they cannot esteem. This love, supposing it sterling, I (*stultus ego!*) returned in kind: but I do not repent it. I may not repent

* Sir J. S.

of my virtue: For, my friend, there are two sorts of charity in the world, and which the greatest, is hard to say. We are bound in compassion to help the poor to live, and the rich to enjoy; who feel a pain peculiar to themselves, that of being mocked by abundance, which denies them their expected happiness, happiness in proportion to their purse. All I learn from such ardent lovers (for such generally they are) is, that it is dangerous to dip into most men below the surface, lest our curiosity should rob us of our good opinion of them. Much decorum, little homage, is requisite. My whole life tells me, that a just demand for esteem is sacred, but rare. We may well afford to pay it, when it is due: nor must our love be withheld, where it is not. Universal love enjoined, is designed as an antidote against reciprocal contempt; and as a discipline to human pride, which must stoop to love men in their infirmities and faults: nor is it more our duty, than our prudence; how else could we hope quarter for our own; which both tell us of others' faults, and bid us forgive them? For many of them we should not suspect, but from the whispers of their parallels in our own bosoms. And therefore, by not forgiving them, we condemn ourselves. If, then, we would be forgiven by ourselves or others, we must forgive:—a truth for which I thank my present review.

What I like least in this survey, for fear it should prove our own case, is this: I find old men apt to think well of themselves, not because they fly vice,

but because vice is fled; repute themselves virtuous, because free from boys' offences; set down impotence for victory; and triumph, because they have not fought, because they meet no foe. And what makes me even tremble, is, I see some, who, blameless in youth, are overtaken by folly when in years, and (of all sights the most deplorable!) I see them dragged by their white beards into the foulest enormities. Faults which are the natural growth of the distinct periods of life, may meet with some toleration: but the monstrous growth of vices out of season no man spares; because the hotbeds of Lucifer only can raise crimes in which nature has no hand.

Heaven avert from us such an end! for, far from blameless was our beginning. In our early days (called the days of innocence), we had our little villanies; our vice in miniature: as years and temptations increased, in years less ripe than in iniquity, we were no petty criminals before we were men. We wished, indeed, for wisdom; but what wisdom would have avoided, we made our favourite choice; what wisdom would have chosen, we bid *wait till to-morrow*. Frequent were our quarrels with our faults; but rarely pushed on to a parting. Pleasure had its charms, and virtue its efforts; and sometimes, in a passion, threw its rider. But triumphs of passion are but short. No rebukes are so powerful as those from our own conduct. Affords not this, then, a strong caution for the future? The distempers of the past periods of our lives are the best antidotes for those to come.

Retrospection informs me, It was now, open war with our enemy; now, perfect peace. How easy sin sat on our hearts; and called itself spirit, wisdom, any thing but what it was! When some merciful discipline awaked us from our trance, we fought; and we conquered: but what was our conquest? Such as rather marred our wrong enjoyments, than wedded us closely to the right. We called the right our beloved, our spouse, but often committed adultery against it; thus losing the joys both of the sinner and the saint:—so motley a creature is man; as mutable as God is fixed. Ours, indeed, was no uncommon case: But others' faults are not our absolution. An absolution it is, however, with which many are content; though His Holiness could scarce give his saints one more ineffectual and vain.

Who is he, my dear friend, that can absolve us, or condemn?—Look through thy whole past life, and answer. What year, nay, what day, has passed unimpowered to vouch for his clement and absolute reign? See I not, in numberless instances, the naked hand of Providence stretched out, as it were, on this side the clouds, pointing us to good? now, shewing how little this world can give, by pouring on us the full enjoyment of it; to turn our hearts on a better: now, shewing us, by the calamities of others, how much we may suffer in this world; to keep us in awe, though ourselves were unhurt: now, breaking to pieces all our own schemes, and raising our happiness out of their ruins; to teach us humility, gratitude,

and on whom to rely; shewing us, that most of our triumphs are errors, and our disappointments, escapes: now bringing us, when most secure, to the brink of the grave, to repress presumption; now snatching us from it, when past all human help, to kindle devotion, and forbid the pain of despair: now defeating us in spite of all our wisdom; now blessing us in spite of all our folly: blessing, to sweeten life; the contrary, to wean us from it; and thus in both worlds to provide for our welfare, as far as the nature of humanity will admit.

What a glorious image of divine goodness is this! The wisest cannot pay half its due in their highest opinion, nor the best in their profoundest acknowledgment of it. And can we not shew as inglorious a portrait of human weakness in ourselves? How are our two different paths of life equally strewed over with follies! with follies thick as autumn leaves, but not thick enough to hide our faults! so numerous both, that I am quite disinclined to look longer backward; and hasten, for refuge, into some change of thought: and here shall only add, that man overlooks the most instructive book in his study, if he reads not himself.

And now, I fear, you will say, that how useful, and natural, soever life's review may be, yet you can find but little pleasure in it. In it there is no pleasure to be found, but what has cost us some pain; but what we have fought our way to, through nature's perverse bias, and besieging temptations. Unbought

pleasure is not the growth of earth: this is a militant state; nor must man unbuckle his armour till he puts on his shroud; for the most victorious veteran may meet with a defeat. Nothing in life's review can give delight, but what we may call our trophies, or spoils taken in war. All else is vanished as a dream.

What have I said? vanished as a dream!—Would to God it were! it is not! Far from it! Every moment is immortal! Every moment shall return, and lay its whole freight, nothing lost, its every whisper, every thought, before the Throne: the throne of Him who sent it to man on that commission, and commands it back, at the stated day, to make its report, to be registered in eternity, for the perusal of angels, and the justification of their King. Tell our gay triflers, that there is no such thing as a trifle upon earth. Can any thing be a trifle, that has an effect eternal? Tell them, though they are so well assured that there is nothing serious upon earth, that time, to man, is, in some respects, a more serious season than eternity: that his eternity is absolutely the creature of time: that it is foul or fair, rejoices or laments, as time, omnipotent time! (that trifle which they throw away) ordains its fate. If they doubt it, let them ask their jovial companion, who died of their happiness last night.

Many, my friend, have made a worse, many a better use of time than we have done. Many have been more criminal, many more innocent. But most men imagine that innocent, which is a negative guilt. An

idle day is a guilty day, in a life so short and precarious; with more than human thought can carry, incumbent on it. There are not more spots in the sun than in the life of a saint.

What then are we?—O my friend! at half a glance through life, I perceive, that, though we have made a shift to creep out of the Augean stable, yet have we not scaled the temple of virtue: though we made the choice of Hercules, yet we wanted his strength: though we sometimes lopped one head off the Hydra; yet, too often, seven shot up in its stead. Whereas, on the contrary, they that have been long tossed by folly, when once landed on a good life, should burn their ships; as Cæsar once burnt those of his legions on the British coast: I mean, that the warmest resolution should destroy the very desire of embarking in ill; and so render a return impracticable.

Such, then, being our feeble attempts, so slender our pretence to wisdom, it becomes us to give those whom we have so freely treated, their revenge: to confess, that, though we are not quite horizontals, yet neither are we quite *upright*; and, though we have set up for reformers, yet we are not, altogether, men.

A man, my friend, is a glorious being; a great rarity; there are but few to be found. A man is an exalted character, doubly great; he is a hero, and a king. Few kings are so great as to reign over their own hearts; few heroes so victorious, as to drive dominions, principalities, and powers, before them.

Both these meet in a real man. He ranks, in reality, but a little lower than the angels; nor long, so low. —O friend! man is a wonderful being! Anon, I will tell thee what thou art; and (mark what I say), I will surprise thee with thyself.

At present, only this.—Dare we say, that we are arrived at the character I have mentioned? No. Dare we say, it was not in our power? No.—Why then this cowardice in a possible hero? Why this disloyalty to himself, in a possible king? Whence this reproach to reason and immortality? Whence this inglorious and absolute desertion from our godlike selves? Sounds that too high?—In whose image were we made? I foresee your objection; I grant that image is impaired: but I quit not my point; I dare affirm, that beings which are free, rational, and immortal, may be gods in due time, through divine grace, if they please.

How deplorable our distance from it! Whence this unmanly defect? Know we not that, unless our conduct is that of a man, it had been better for us if in a lower species had fallen our lot? Why were we called into being? What we have enjoyed already, poorly pays our mothers' pain, and our own. Wouldst thou repeat thy part in the comedy? act it over again? Wouldst thou be rejumbled in this rough Thespian cart, dragged on by those two skeletons, half-starv'd hope and panting expectation, through bad roads, now worse and worse, and thy fellow-strollers in a constant conspiracy against both thy pay and thy applause, how well soever thy part is performed, how

great soever thy indulgence is to them?—Thou wouldst not. Here and there, indeed, we might pick up a lucky hour, *alboque notanda lapillo*, that might make us smile again. But nature, and indeed reason, starts back at the whole. If we should find a small pearl in one oyster of a million, it would hardly make us fishers for life.

Wouldst thou, then, cease to be?—No, nature shudders at it. That horn of the alternative wounds more than the former. If so, our wishes, as well as our nature, push us into eternity. And shall we fear what we wish? Fear it we must, unless we provide a good reception there. We have provided for to-morrow, and to-morrow was not satisfied. If we provide for eternity, our satisfaction will be full. We have provided for many years, for more than we shall ever see; but not for those which will never end.

How great the dishonour, my dear fellow-criminal! in us, who were not blind to the grand futurity, were not cold to the divine rewards, to let the glowing thoughts of immortality so far mingle with the dregs of sense! Is not this, with the wings of an eagle, to drop into the mire? There lies the pleasure of which the world is so fond; that bane of private property, that presage of public slavery, that sure annihilation of a rational creature, and as sure a creation of a wretch eternal. Pleasure has robbed earth of more lives, and heaven of more souls, than the body collective of all other evils discharging their whole quivers on man.

Our weakness, and our security under the consequences of it, is no uncommon case. Blushing I look round for its fatal cause. And do I not find it, where, if found, it must increase my confusion? Do I not find it in the great goodness of God? If so, how must that reproach and brand the deep ingratitude of man? And, I think, I find it there.

THE GENERAL CAUSE OF SECURITY IN SIN.

For, consider, my good friend, what can he do that ventures to continue in sin? He cannot defy the wrath divine; that is not in man. He cannot acquiesce, under the terror of its consequence; he must therefore presume on divine mercy. "I know "myself worthless, yet earth pours its blessings. I "know myself worthless, yet Heaven buys me with "its blood. What is to be feared, what is not to be "hoped, from such a God? Be my crimes what they "will, some yet unrevealed expedient will be found "for my safety: for 'God is love.' Thus, possibly, he may reason: and thus, at once, do two strange things; cite Scripture to his ruin, and make the mercies of God fatal to man.

God, indeed, is love: but shall man therefore be a monster? and a monster in the judgment of all men? All confess, that there is an admirable consent between the precepts of virtue and the sentiments of our common reason. All confess, that virtue receives a constant approbation from the uniform verdict of our consciences. All confess, that virtue practised brings

in the greatest happiness to society. He, therefore, that is not virtuous, can give himself no satisfactory account why he was born either with reason, or conscience, or a desire of happiness; since he has nothing of what they all demand from him. And, therefore, he must appear an unaccountable being; that is, a monster, not only to others, but himself.

This is more than enough to make vice our aversion, though God were love to that absurd degree, which our folly may fancy, and which our vice most certainly wishes and wants. But there is no such love in Him: it is blasphemous to suppose it. God is love; and therefore—what? That which many may least expect—therefore God is terrible. From whence arises his marvellous love to man? Of man He has no need; the divine happiness is complete. In man He sees no merit: He knows we are worthless, as well as we ourselves; but then, far better than we, He knows that we are—immortal; that therefore—(most interesting, and most alarming thought!) that therefore we must suffer, or enjoy, fo ever!

Hence, be most assured, my friend, his regard for man. Hence, for a worm, to-day crawling out of the earth, and to-morrow, more despicably still, crawling into corruption; his compassion, his solicitude, his councils held on high; and all the wonders of his love. Wonders?—much more than wonders to man; they are wonders in heaven! They strike with amazement the first angels of light.

Conscious of thy own meanness, canst thou scarce

believe that divine indulgence should thus abound? Consider: God, indeed, called us out of the dust. But he called us into an eternity; an eternity, henceforward, commensurate with his own. And shall not his concern be commensurate in degree; bear a proportion to his gift? Shall not one shew as much of the Great God as the other? As he has made us immortal, he has made us also endangered, creatures; creatures that must, necessarily, stand the most important and incomprehensible consequence of their own doubtful conduct for ever. Does not this abate thy surprise at such abundant indulgence? It must, if God is love, and vouchsafes to look on us in the mentioned light. In that light he looks on us. Thence his more than paternal bowels of compassion for the most unworthy of men. Thence his omnipotence exerted in giving proofs of his love.

But why, sayest thou, is this love terrible? Is not that love most terrible which tells us we are in danger of being eternally undone? And this love tells us so; for (as I conceive) it never had existed, had not that been our case.

How deep, then, and deplorable is their mistake, who presume to sin because God is so good; when God is so good purely because he knows that presumption will be their ruin? Who presume on impunity for sin, because God is so good; when God is so good, purely because he knows that sin and impunity are incompatible? Such men make a demonstration of their danger, the basis of their security; and

fear nothing, because an Omnipotence, that is solicitous for their welfare, gives proof that he is apprehensive of their destruction.

Such men reason ill. Still worse, experience cannot convince them. What their experience of every day, every hour, proves to be true, they will not believe. They doubt, if they shall be (not to use a harsher word) condemned for their sins. Yet they know that they shall die. Now, as I take it, their death is a prelude, and assurance, of their future condemnation: for, if beings, originally immortal, die for another's sin, can it be doubted but that they shall be condemned for their own? And that death (which is a demonstration that sin shall not escape unpunished) is unavoidable, they are convinced by their senses. Unless our Centaurs, therefore, lay aside their senses, as well as their reason, for the future they must forego vain hopes, too frequent and too sanguine among them; nor longer turn a proof of immortality into a presumption on impunity; Heaven's indulgence, into destruction; and gather poison from the tree of life.

I know not, my friend, if others have urged these arguments, with regard to the cause of God's great indulgence to man, and the certainty of punishment for sin; but to me they appear of a very weighty and affecting nature. There are some truths of the last moment to men, which, at first aspect, have somewhat surprising in them: they require, and well deserve, our second thoughts.

I will give you two; one from Scripture; one from

my own thoughts: "With the Lord there is mercy, "therefore shall he be feared."—With man there is immortality, therefore shall he tremble,—tremble at himself! tremble at his own power, which can give what colour he will to a whole eternity: tremble at his own glory; that he has angels for his guard; and an Almighty for his friend: yes, tremble at all that might incline him to triumph; for these grandeurs, that inspire presumption, increase danger; are magnificent assurances that he may be plunged beyond hope, be lost past retrieve.

God, indeed, forbids our despair: but not because his love will save us in our sins; but because despair stops all effort at amendment; and without it, his love desires our welfare in vain. His love is such, as to give us encouragement and support in every thing, but sin: such as to support our spirits amid the ruins of a falling world; but not under the cloud of one unrepented guilt.

This flings light on a part of Scripture, which has a cloud on it in some eyes; and, with others, quite ruins its credit: "Work out your salvation with fear and "trembling:" A strange text, to those who fear and tremble at nothing so much as at a disappointment in their lusts. Our salvation must be worked out. Wishing, and willing, will not bring it; hoping, and confiding, will not procure it; it will not come by chance; no, nor by gift, and infusion. It must be worked out with fear; because fear is the strongest guard of diligence, without which, this work cannot

go on; and with trembling, lest we should think too lightly of the divine justice; and lest our very confidence should betray us, even though we were good men: for good men have failed purely from a good opinion of their own state. For a good opinion begets security; security begets negligence; and negligence, temptation; and temptation, a fall: and (if unrepented) a fall into that state, where our first wish will be, that we never had been born; and (worse still!) where there is no last. Pain is sometimes so great even here, that we lose our senses; there it will be far greater; and (how terrible to say!) our senses will not be lost.

THOUGHTS FOR AGE.

On the bank of that state we, now, stand: that post of wisdom, if ever men are wise; which is the reason why they wish it may be long before they arrive at it; for folly is the favourite of mankind: and is it not our own? Though there we stand, we scarce believe it; so much our wishes obstruct our belief: or, believing, scarce know what being there means; so much familiarity takes away our attention; and robs things of their power to strike strong on our minds. Eternity has so often passed our lips, that it has forgot its way to our hearts. Did it enter there, would it not extinguish every earth-born passion in them? Yes; as the sun, the smallest spark of fire.

Though we stand on its awful brink, such our leaden bias to the world, we turn our faces the wrong

way; we are still looking on our old acquaintance, time; though now, so wasted and reduced, that we can see little more of him than his wings and his scythe: our age enlarges his wings to our imagination; and our fear of death, his scythe; as time himself grows less. His consumption is deep: his annihilation is at hand.

Should we not then turn us round, and look on eternity? That glorious home of all that survives, and outshines the sun; that kingdom of souls immortal! Of immortal souls, time is only the maturing womb; from eternity they wait their real birth. Are we, my friend, matured? or shall we prove abortive to the world of glory? If we were mature, why tarry here so long? By protracting life, Heaven shews not its favour to those that are fit to die. Is not, the business of our day undone, the cause why we are suffered to sit up so late? to be so long on our weary legs, after the common hour of human rest? I fear it is. I much fear we are permitted to live, purely because—we do not deserve it.

Is it not (my languid fellow-traveller in the deep vale of years) high time to be wiser? lest the greatest of curses should fall on us, that of being wise too late; which is the most emphatical definition of a fool. The world is worn out to us; and we are worn out to the world. The world, which knows its own interest, quits us, as rats a ruined house; if we knew ours, should we not quit the world, as bees an exhausted flower? We can make no more honey of it;

its sweets are gone. Where are its formerly sweet delusions, its airy castles, and glittering spires? Are we not left on a lonely, barren, briery heath, to grope out our weary way, through the dusk of life, to our final home? Shall not the dissolved enchantment set the captive free? Are we Torrismonds or Sudburys? Shall our dotage rivet our chains, when kind nature would knock them off? To speak a language even Centaurs may understand, "A last card, well played, "may yet win the game!"

Consider, are we scheming still? stretching out a trembling hand, which wants to be supported, to grasp at the nothing that comes next? Any thing now gained would rather mock, than enrich us; can any thing enrich that cannot be enjoyed? Grasp at new faculties, and new powers, if thou canst find them, or new objects will only laugh us to scorn. But hadst thou even those, if the value of things is in proportion to our term in them, their price at our market should fall very low.

It is a good thing to know when we have *all*, and to laugh at that cheat *more*, which is ever stealing our hearts. But it is as uncommon, as good. Hence, seniors are milking the world after it is dry. Is it not a shame that we should be gleaning sublunary straws, when our harvest of life is over? hoping an after-crop in our stubble? though called to diadems, where harvest is perpetual; where a harvest, more than golden, profusely crowns an eternal year?

As to the pass which is so much feared; the dark,

subterranean entry to future life; into which our weak imagination peeps, and starts back, as a child at a shadow; all thanks to the blessed Gospel, we know what will light us up a lamp in it, and lessen its formidable gloom. I have seen a death-bed, the reverse of poor Altamont's, where the by-standers were the greatest sufferers; and the king of terrors, by Christian patience, was overmatched. The power of religion shone out without a veil; nor could any rising suspicions of hypocrisy dim its lustre. In such scenes as these the human heart is no longer invisible to man; and a glimpse of heaven is discovered in such a sight.

We know what can make us sleep sweetly in the dust; what can smooth the rough transition; soften death into a sort of translation, which interrupts not (blessed be God!) our existence, nor our peace. In peace have many died; and, therefore, it is certain, all may. The whole secret for obtaining that peace is an absolute resignation to the Most High; which (as hard a task as it seems to some) at the bottom is no more than owning him to be God. And a contrary conduct (as little as it is considered) has atheism, partial atheism, in it. It is questioning some of his attributes, though not denying a God. May that peace be thine! My heart beats with ardour for thy present peace, and future bliss. May I share it with thee! What a poor broken embrace, what a sad fragment of friendship, is that which ends at the grave? Such a transitory tie gives a second dart to death,

and a double dissolution to departing man: That of soul and body scarce more severe.

Would to Heaven! that all friendships were, evidently, friendships of immortal men; such, I mean, as gave proof of their having each other's eternal interests at heart. Modern, at least fashionable, friendship flows from a polluted source: it tastes too strong of earth; without the least tincture of man (as above described); without the least spirit of immortality in it. Nay, worse; it often springs from causes that will not bear the light; and resembles the dark streams of Alpheus, and Arethusa, that mingle under ground: it should rather resemble Eridanus, which is said to flow from heaven.

How many have we of these subterranean attachments! What is it ties our Centaurs together in so long a string?—Leaping together the same barriers of the decent, and the just; ranging the same forbidden grounds; gorging at the same manger; neighing the same inflammatory tune; or being daily rid, and sorely galled, by the domineering insolence of the same inflamed mistress.

Since such their accomplishments, I hope to levy a Lapithean infantry sufficient successfully to carry on the war now opened against them.—As Chiron blew the trumpet which called the Greeks to the siege of Troy; I hear there is a modern Chiron, who sounds as many instruments as Nebuchadnezzar did to summon his idolaters; and that he raises forces, and ceases not to carry on the war, at a vast expense.

Doubtless he was typified of old by him who is said in Virgil,

Ære ciere viros, Martemque accendere cantu.

For my own part, my friend, I fancy my campaign will soon be over. I have frequent pains; and I think I hear the Master call. If so, should we not leave this world, though not yet admitted of the next? Have we not been, through life, anxiously providing one year for the next? And shall we grudge to pay half that pains for an eternity?

Consider, my immortal friend, should we not leave the world, before the world leaves us? It is dismal to be left. There is a noble absence from earth, while we are yet on it. There is a noble intimacy with heaven, while we are yet beneath it. If our affection flies thither, we shall be welcomed by superior beings, and not be missed by men who delight in novelties; or, if missed, admired the more for being once in the right. They must be somewhat out of this world, who would be deep in the concerns of the next: and is it not time we should be so? Till the business of life (as it is called) is over, its real business is rarely begun: nor always then. Age is apt to carry its allowed title to repose too far: age is the most busy period of human life. But its transactions are not with men. Therefore that absence above mentioned is most fit for us. It is a sort of a third state between this world and the next. How proper, then, for the reception of those, whose term is out here, according to the common age of man.

And can it be hard for us to lay this world aside, since they that have fared the best in the world, have only the fewest objections against it? Is it not an old tragic comedy read over and over, which by no means,

—— Decies repetita placebit? Juv.

To speak in the licentious style of comedy, man is a mule, of mixed origin, of heaven and earth: earth has had more than its share of us; give heaven the rest: and that for a double reason. All know that hope is life's cordial: it works miracles; without happiness it makes men happy. What have been all the pleasures of our former years, but joyous prophecies, and bold promises, in the name of to-morrow? Worldly hope in age expires. If he provides not another hope, a man of years, and a man of misery, mean the same thing. Therefore the same steps are to be taken, whether we would sweeten the remaining dreg of life, or provide a triumph for eternity.

The worldly wishes which an old man sends out, are like Noah's dove; they cannot find whereon to light, and must return to his own heart again for rest. His natural, and, perhaps, most allowable and proper wish, is for respect. But respect for age is a virtue. I need say no more to convince him, how little of it he must expect: and, indeed, he but ill deserves it from others, who, by doting on the world, denies it to himself.

When infirmity drives the world from us, or disease confines us to our chamber, shall we not be all alone

with the great Father of spirits, and Searcher of hearts? Is it not worth while a little beforehand to practise our lesson, that we may be the better prepared to sustain such an interview? Our wisdom cannot add to the days, but it can lighten the burden, of life; and lessen the terrors of death. Death forgot in youth is folly; in age, madness. With regard to that king of terrors, how many in years borrow the security of youth; for it is impossible it should belong to them. Happy they, whom death, when he comes, shall find at home! his visit will have less of terror in it. Out of pure decency to the dignity of human nature, of which the decays and imperfections should not be exposed, men in years, by recess, should fling a veil over them, and to the world be a little buried, before they are interred. An old man's too great familiarity with the public, is an indignity to the human nature, and a neglect of the divine. A greater intercourse with it than the calls of duty and virtue demand, is indecent, irreligious, and contemptible; speaking acquiescence in contempt, dotage on the world, and oblivion of eternity. His fancying himself to be still properly one of this world, and on a common foot with the rest of mankind, is, as if a man getting drunk in the morning, after a long nap, lifting his drowsy lids at sun-set, should take it for break of day.

But grant him to be still of this world; grant him all it can give; what is this world, but a machine played on us by our great enemy for the dissipation of human thought, whose scattered rays must be

collected as it were to a focal point, in order to duly warm our devotion; and set a pious heart on fire? And can any happiness subsist in age without piety? Impossible! Its intimacy with the world, is not for the pleasures it can give; they are past: it is purely to dislodge the thoughts of death, which intrude at that season; that is, it is purely to decline the pleasures of heaven.

Why, my friend, is our day of trial extended beyond the expiration of the common term? Is it not indulged to the great need our past conduct has of it? And shall our folly reverse the kind intention of that divine indulgence to us? Shall it set us farther from our God? I am never so strongly struck with the weakness and depravity of man, as when I see grey hairs playing the fool. Hope, which in other evil appearances supports our spirits, fails us there. What can shock common sense, what can create amazement, if not the failings that would dishonour youth, in those that are miraculously alive after the stated period of human life? This is an outrage to reason, beyond the boldness of the desperado that confounds us most; this outdares the felon repeating his crime, not only under the gallows, but with the cord about his neck. Where is that world into which you and I were born? It is under-ground; and a generation of strangers are dancing over our coevals, long since in the dust. Where is that world into which we shall be born? Far, far above the sun; if, while we are beneath it, we behave ourselves like men. But if this life was our only concern, consider, that nothing but

being wiser, that is better, than those born after us, can possibly rescue the decays of age from aversion and contempt.

Fain would I have my pen of some service to the aged, now my nearest relations; those of blood, are no more. To the former am I related by like date, duty, interest, and above all,

—— Nunc ipsa pericula jungunt. Ov.

Still eager in worldly pursuits, warm in the chase of shadows, shall we rush, as down a precipice, and leap plump into the jaws of extempore death?

No; let us halt in our career; pause on the brink; and provide for our eternal peace. Can I better express my love than by pressing it on thee? I press it strongly: and know, my friend, that Heaven, and (as I have shewn thee) a most indulgent Heaven, joins my pathetic wish; and angels, ardent angels, say—Amen. And what want they? (mark it well,) they want nothing but thy own concurrence to crown their wishes for thy welfare.

Dear sir,

Yours.

LETTER VI.

THE DIGNITY OF MAN.

THE CENTAUR'S RESTORATION TO HUMANITY.

THE DIGNITY OF MAN RESUMED.

THE CONCLUSION.



THE DIGNITY OF MAN.

HERE, sir, I enter on that elevated theme, The Dignity of Man.

Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo. VIRG.

I shall scale the summit of human nature, and set its dignity in the strongest light, that the contrast may strike our Centaurs with a just sense of their own ghastly condition, and more clearly demonstrate the depth of their fall. Many are for degrading their nature, that they may lessen its duties; and for looking on themselves as beings insignificant, that they may be profligate beings with a better grace, and (as they would flatter themselves) with more excuse. They run voluntarily into this error, as men run into the dark, that they may sin without a blush; framing a

lie (which is the common case) for their apology. Their master Epicurus meant much the same, by setting the gods at such a distance; and, for their repose, exempting them from the trouble of inspecting the trifles of men. A due sense of the grandeur of man's nature and destination, is his best bulwark against the frequent and violent assaults temptation makes on him. This is a subject which I wish had been taken into better hands: for, as it demands all the powers of the noblest pen to reach its heights; so the world stands in need of having this, above all other, pressed home on their hearts; for all other of any great moment are implied in it. There are but few, whose opinions do not too much widen the distance between an angel and a man. I shall bring them nearer together, as the best means for the reformation of Centaurs (as you shall see) and for the most noble exaltation of men.

I have just now observed, that "Angels want no-"thing but thy own concurrence to crown their "wishes for thy welfare." This is true. Shall I not then be pardoned, if I presume to put the same meaning into somewhat a higher style, and say (with all reverence) that Heaven's desires are at thy mercy? —If so, think, and think again, what art thou? Thou poor, feeble, earth-born, mortal! What art thou?— Darts not on thee a stream of heavenly light? Dost thou not see an amazing majesty in man? Have I not, then, made my bold promise good? Did I not, above, tell thee, I would surprise thee with thyself?

Nor can I rest here. A man is almost more than man can conceive; a marvellous being, that rises above himself, darting rays of glory beyond the reach of his own sight. My heart is tied to this endearing, transporting, and triumphant theme.

Is thy consent necessary to finish what is begun, or, rather, only designed, above? How strangely this sounds! Yet must I proceed in a still higher strain. —In thee it is, (how seemingly bold and impious so to speak!) Yes, it is in thee, to grant, or deny, the request of the Almighty.—And impious, indeed, it would be if unauthorized by Scripture, in which that request is made.

A requesting Omnipotence!—What can stun and confound thy reason more? What more can ravish and exalt thy heart? It cannot but ravish and exalt; it cannot but gloriously disturb and perplex thee, to take in all that thought suggests. Thou child of the dust! thou speck of misery and sin! how abject thy weakness! how great is thy power! thou crawler on earth, and, possible (I was about to say) controller of the skies!

Weigh, and weigh well, the wondrous truths I have in view; which cannot be weighed too much; which, the more they are weighed, amaze the more; which, to have supposed, before they were revealed, would have been as great madness, and to have presumed on, as great sin, as it is now madness and sin not to believe. Such precious and beatifying news is brought us by revelation; that Revelation which is

rejected and despised, by those that affect to be thought wiser, and happier, than the rest of mankind.

The truths I mean are implied in what follows: viz. Heaven intends, desires, labours, works miracles, or more (if more can be), for thy welfare; it presses thee, it importunately presses thee, to comply. Consider; how art thou courted? And by whom? By Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; thy fellow-labourers for thy good. How is thy alliance sought? And at what price? Angels, inspecting, admiring angels, cannot compute its value. An extreme of love, an extreme of glory, this, which those angels (if angels could envy) might envy to man; for, was it not denied to them?

Thou younger, but darling son of Heaven! wonder; tremble; triumph!—Yes, triumph; tremble; wonder! Thy greatest emotion falls short of the mighty cause. Thou greatly beloved, greatly favoured, greatly destined, and, oh! greatly endangered! take heed to thy steps; nor less take fire at thy prize.

Art thou more exalted, or terrified, at what I say? Exaltation and fear both rise in extremes. With both passions comply; highly reverence thy own nature; more profoundly adore the Divine. Adore it with voice, heart, and life; and thus to glad all heaven, assert, rescue, ennoble, and with bliss eternal crown thyself; for without thee, in the constituted order of things, Heaven is unable to do it. Its almighty hand is, as it were, tied up by its own de-

cree. Without thee, thou amazing being! (pardoned be the word so bold) there is impotence in Heaven. Nor is it bold when explained; for impotence when voluntary, is no impeachment of power.

Is all this rapturous?—Yes, such a rapture as nothing but gross ignorance, or more fatal infidelity, can forbear. Is not rapture due for felicities inexpressible? And what felicity is so much as second to this? It is the close, frequent, and feeling inspection of these *interiora* of man's sublime condition, as immortal, and redeemed, that is the highest cordial of human joy, and the richest mine of human thought: a mine deep dug by few! and yet without it, man is not more a stranger to the natives of Saturn, than to himself. Without it, he must want the true, genuine, vital spirit of a Christian. None without it can be filled with the light and comfort of the Holy Ghost. This, O ye Methodists! gives the real new birth; this enters man in quite another world. In his former world all things are absolutely changed; well nigh annihilated as to his wonted passion for them.

"The heavens declare the glory of the Lord, and "the firmament sheweth his handy-work." But the Christian mine I have mentioned, infinitely more demands our adoration and praise; infinitely more demands our exultation and joy. Are we transported, and justly transported, at the wonderful operations of nature, and decline we the contemplation of greater wonders in ourselves? And when the former but amuses an hour, the last blesses an eternity? In

those stupendous views it is, that the mercy of God, and glory of man, at highest shine. Hence it is, that constant joy is enjoined to Christians as an absolute duty; a duty, on weaker motives, as absolutely impracticable.

You see, sir, that to dive deep into man, is to dive into an ocean of love divine; which first drowns us in amazement, then lifts us into triumph; and at length, lands us (if we are wise) on eternal life. But too many swim only on the surface of our nature; like a feather, through their levity, incapable of sinking to those solid and shining advantages, those pearls of great price; those great, awakening, and strongly stimulating motives to virtue, that lie below. But I shall resume this subject before I close. What is already said, is enough to produce that good effect which you will find in the marvellous scene, which very soon will open on you.

THE CENTAUR'S RESTORATION TO HUMANITY.

At present, my friend, we must quit this consecrated, for enchanted, ground, as you will soon, to your surprise and disgust, perceive. I know it is not to your taste, nor, indeed, to my own. But levity has its use, when perverse patients will refuse what is salutary, if conveyed in any vehicle less agreeable to their vitiated taste; and the grave reader, who nauseates it, sacrifices (through too great delicacy) to mere appearances, the substance of what is right.

Thou knowest that our Centaurs can scarce be persuaded that they are not still human creatures; though *mœchantur, scortantur, adulterantur, diabolantur* (I am forced to make words that are bad enough for them); and not so much as retain

——Veteris vestigia formæ. Ov.

Are they not (to speak with reverence in the language of the prophet) as "fed horses in the morning?" Do they not "assemble by troops in ladies' houses?" It is "harlot" in the original, and so by us translated. But that is not their only objection to the Scriptures. Perhaps an old Arabian proverb may have greater authority with them. What says it? "Let him that "would be safe, avoid seven things: wasps, spiders, "hyænas, crocodiles, effs, adders, and fine women."

Here, then, I shall begin my exorcism. Its words must be strange and barbarous, suited to the occasion. Let not your ear, my friend, be shocked; but listen, and wait the event.

"May Lais, Thais, Limax, Lupa, Succuba, Qua- "drantaria, Obolaria, Euriole, Sthenio, Medusa, "Erinnys, Megæra, Tisiphone—May all these, and "all such ladies, whether sick or sound, high or low, "of blood and title, or ditch and dunghill; natives, "foreign, or infernal—May this glorious group of "Torrismond's angels, these gorgons, furies, harpies, "leeches, syrens, centaur-making syrens! paid or "unpaid, keeping or kept, on fire or quenched, ge- "nevaed or citroned, in closet or cellar, in tavern,

" bagnio, brothel, round-house, bridewell, or New-
" gate.—Oh! may they cease from this hour, to sing
" or dance, smile or frown, please or plague, pray or
" swear, our British, unbritish youth, manhood, and
" age, out of their senses, health, estates, reputation,
" human nature, and hopes of heaven!

" And, these enchantresses laying aside their
" spells, may the bewitched of Great Britain recover
" their pristine form, as Circe's herd at the prayer of
" Ulysses. At the touch of my disenchanting pen,
" may they leap out of their hides for joy; and lay-
" ing hold on their long-deserted definition of man,
" reason and two legs, walk uprightly for the fu-
" ture."

Rejoice with me, my friend, for do I dream? or didst thou not observe? Didst thou not hear?—*Intonuit lævum.* As the dark cloud which caused it is vanished, and a flood of light rushes in; so shall it fare with them. I see their dawning reason; I see the break of their moral day. And what I see, I shall relate; and what I relate, though strange, let no man disbelieve.

The Centaurs that can read, on perusal of The Dignity of Man, are stung, as the Trojan horse, when Laocoon's spear pierced his side; and groan as deeply as that, when

Insonuere cavæ, gemitumque dedere cavernæ. VIRG.

Most of them are much affected, but differently; being at last fully convinced that they are not men.

One burns his Bolingbroke; another, an indecent song: this calls in his bills, pleading privilege no more; that bespeaks a pew against the next quarter: a third blames his delay; swears he will pray directly; falls on his knees, like Cæsar's horse,—rises again, with a sigh, and solemn vow, that he will be master of his *Pater-noster* before to-morrow: a fourth subscribes all his gains by false dice to the Foundling Hospital: a fifth orders two little boys to school immediately, and sends ten guineas to their mothers in bridewell: a sixth, in a flame of pious zeal, damns a senseless world; and undertakes, in less than a week, to demonstrate that adultery is a crime: a seventh, &c.

But I must not triumph too much. I have not had equal success with the female Centaurs. From a natural constancy of temper, and habitual aversion to change, they come but slowly into my wishes. But to make amends, when they come, they come with a vengeance, and overshoot the mark. Mr. W——ly (whose converts some of them are) tells them, that they stand not upright, unless they lean a little backward; like a crosier, or like themselves when they coyly refuse a salute: thus, though converted, they find not the straight line, but stand still a little bent —to the wrong.

Besides, of my male converts I have somewhat to complain: for some, though changed at heart, yet awed by fashion, and vain of being still fine men, are ashamed to own it, and appear to be fools to save

their credit. These hypocrites in vice, these moral fops, ridiculously good, may be called little men in Centaurs' skins; or coward virtue in masquerade.

And, worst of all, of some Centaurs I am quite in despair. They fly my pen, and will not be touched for their distemper; but, being deep stung by worse than the tarantula, run mad for music, and dance themselves to death. Others, with Swift (in that respect a Centaur himself) look on the noble quadruped as superior to the man. Others, on the contrary, approve, and heartily wish a restoration to humanity; but are careless and indolent. They would, indeed, if a dæmon was not in possession, they would be good; but will not be at the trouble of bringing a writ of ejectment, though Sophronius proffers to draw it up for them. The lowest price of virtue is vigilance and industry; and if it costs us no more, it comes very cheap.

As for those that are truly conscious of their calamity, and heartily desirous of an escape, mark the good effect of the least tendency to goodness; the mighty change, a restoration of the human figure is actually begun. But the process is gradual; nature advances, never leaps. They became not Centaurs all at once.

Nemo repente fuit turpissimus. Juv.

As evil habits, which occasioned their transformation, were gradually contracted; it is no wonder that their recovery should prove equally gradual and slow.

One sheds a mane, another drops a tail, and appears only as too closely docked: some wonder to see slender fingers sprouting through hoofs by their penitential tears mollified into flesh: some, like dancing dogs, continue upright some time; but tired of that unnatural restraint, drop into Centaurs for life: so dangerous in moral distempers, as well as natural, is a relapse; some, quite restored, yet still retain so much of their former nature, that they are apt to trip, if a strong temptation, like a stone or cart-rut, lies across their way: some can scarce believe their good fortune, and fear it is a dream: thers, too sanguine, cry out "Brother!" to the first man they see, who starts at his new relation, with a hide still sticking at his heels.

What a loud call do I hear among them for things strange and new! for dresses suited to the human shape; for pleasures suited to the human mind; for Bibles, Prayer-books, debt-books; for virtuous consorts, faithful friends, and fit objects of charity; for rational improvement and employments; no longer for Newmarket trappings, but for human ornaments: —this, however, where the restoration is complete. Poor Sudbury is still awkwardly hopping on three legs, while others stand firmly planted on half four; one of whom, more learned than the rest, cries out,

Πλέον ἥμισυ παντὸς. HES.

The rest naturally take it for a pious thanksgiving, and give a loud Amen.

They that are quite recovered, arrayed in decent plain apparel, not dappled as the morning, with embroidery, or with lace all over listed like the beautiful Indian ass, call a council; and their first manly resolution is to proclaim peace with the Lapithæ, or men of virtue; with whom, from time immemorial, the Centaurs have been at war. Chiron bent his bow against them; but of war various has been the fortune between them; till within this last half-century, the Centaurs increasing both in numbers and boldness, wearing frontlets of brass on their foreheads, and Horace's *æs triplex* on their breasts; and having of late a mighty giant at their head, whose quills, more fatal than the porcupine's, threatened a thousand deaths at once, they began to dream of nothing less than victory complete. But the present reinforcement of their enemies will turn the scale against them. I say reinforcement; for the next step my converts take, is to list into the Lapithean service, determined to meet their late friends in no friendly sort, under a banner with this motto:

Quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc sum

Which promises victory; for they are very formidable foes, who have had the fortitude first to conquer themselves.

At the news of their revolt, offended Torrismond, burning for revenge, cries, "Ha, ha," snuffs the battle from afar,

Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem. VIRG.

The glory of his nostrils is terrible; and, still more abundantly his heroic choler rises on hearing that their first destined enterprise is against Bolingbroke-castle; that delight of his eyes, and defiance of his foes: for he deems it impregnable, because it is moated round with Acheron, and its aspiring proud battlements threaten heaven.

This castle was built out of the various ruins of many demolished forts of infidelity, pompously put together, faced over with a material more shining than solid, and cemented with untempered mortar. Sophronius* heads the laudable enterprise. The castle is taken as was ancient Babylon. He first turns the general stream of the nation, by the force of strong and solid eloquence, into a new channel, as Cyrus did the river Euphrates; then entering the castle, and finding the garrison turning things sacred to profane use, and drowned in debauch, obtains a sudden and complete victory, but is a most merciful conqueror; for, instead of putting any to death, he only puts the most sensible of them out of countenance; and to their own darling delights and boasted glories, instead of the galleys, condemns them for life; obliging them, however, in acknowledgment of his clemency, to wear yellow cockades impressed with these words, "Be thou a Centaur still." The bad man's choice includes his punishment.

The same Sophronius, adorned with his well-deserved mural crown, rescues the character of a late

* An excellent writer in this controversy, now in the press.

pious and learned prelate, which the Centaurs' boasted Achilles, (who

Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat,) Hor.

had dragged, like Hector's body, round the town in the dirt. For the glory of Britain, and for the light and emulation of posterity, I see it inscribed on a column of adamant, with a Bolingbroke *couchant* embossed on the base; who now contributes to support (as much as such a feeble Atlas can), that celestial character which he lately laboured to destroy; proud of his uncircumcised reason, which reason, notwithstanding, had evidently lost its authority with himself; for when that is preserved, sense submits to reason; and when sense submits to reason, reason submits to the revealed word of God. And (since some are in love with words) I must observe, that reason stooped to revelation, is reason still; only reason more reasonable; and its great hazard of error is all that it has lost.

And now, my friend, what shall I say on this happy revolution? Shall I not outboast Augustus? He said of Rome, "*Lateritiam inveni, marmoream reliqui.*" I, of London, *Inveni equinam, reliqui humanam.*

Nothing remains but to cleanse the now deserted stables, and to render them fit for human use, and to persuade the she-grooms who kept them, into some more decent, and less diabolical, course of life; especially my patroness; who for the honour (as she calls

it) of my Dedication, has promised to give into my superstition; and to play fair, at least on Sundays, and learn her Catechism, when the masquerades for the season are over; which, out of an unsurmountable regard for the first, and most amorous, and most musical son, Chiron, she confesses ingenuously she cannot forbear: for, ladies love a Centaur still.

THE DIGNITY OF MAN RESUMED.

It is high time, my friend, to quit this fairy land, of which I know you are heartily tired; and to perform my promise in resuming The Dignity of Man; a theme which my heart affects, and which your conduct in some measure inspires: and who can think of it, unimproved? He who thinks of his dignity, necessarily thinks of his God; and he who values his dignity, as necessarily worships and obeys Him. In a due sense, therefore, of human dignity, our endangered virtue finds her most powerful guard.

Think you that I have carried the dignity of man too high? Spare the sacred page. "There, one of "Adam's seed converses face to face with his Crea- "tor: another is called his friend: He who made "the worlds, delights to be called the son of a third: "He who made the worlds, even died for the mean- "est of men: the meanest of men has it within his "power to be an heir of the most mighty God, and "a joint heir with the most blessed Jesus." Absolves not this the boldest stroke of my pen? What can

raise our self-estimation so high, what can aggrandize human nature so much as this?

In Heaven's great and constant effort for our welfare, is capitally written the dignity of man. That is a key to the moral world, and opens, and explains the reason of all God's otherwise mysterious conduct in it; every step of which is evidently calculated for man's present or future felicity, or both. The long-shining series, the golden chain of all God's marvellous acts, from the beginning to the close of time, speaks his uninterrupted regard for human nature: and what can more loudly proclaim human dignity than this? O let it not be said, that man's dignity is declared by all things, but the manners of man!

As distant as they may be thought by the thoughtless, heaven and earth are so near together, so shot (as it were) into one another, that good men are truly "foreigners on earth; have their conversation in hea-"ven; are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the "household of God." To speak allusively to the patriarchal vision, good men are angels; only, as yet, at the bottom of the ladder; and some angels are only men made perfect, at the top of it. As a man from an embryo, so differs an angel from a man; what one is, the other soon shall be. Since this is the case (and a most glorious case it is), and since by such multitudes it is either not considered, or not known;

O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona nôrint! VIRG.

would be no needless memorandum, or improper motto, for all mankind.

But you still have your objection on the whole—"Will not raising so high, and dwelling so long on "the dignity of man, occasion pride?" No; on the reverse, a due sense of it will necessitate humility. Pride springs from a conceit, which an individual has of his superiority over some others of the same species. The dignity I speak of is equally the dignity of all men; and what levels, cannot exalt. It will necessitate humility; because without that, it cannot preserve itself: our native dignity will die in the result. As for that dignity which occasions your objection, we have, I confess, too much of it. We have in abundance what may be called lunar great men: men in themselves opaque, who borrow beams from their circumstances, or situation; which beams they shew, like the moon, by night: I mean, when ignorance prevails; then the darkened understandings of their admirers give them leave to shine.

The lunar grandees have generally many little surrounding satellites, that help, by their adulations, to gild their opacity. But of such great men, who are forced to assume (as men must plunder, who would be gainers where nothing is due), it must be said, that the greatest of them would be greater still, if they would only please to be a little less.

They only have solar, or self-born, light, who live up to the dignity of their nature. The light is not only their own, and illustrious; but inextinguishable, and eternal. These, as they are the greatest, are also the most humble, of mankind. For they well know,

that our grandeur is to be looked for in the love of God, not in the merit of man. And therefore they set it down as a maxim (and a maxim most true and useful it is), "No man ever thought too highly of his "nature, or too meanly of himself."

Here would I cease. But how hard to get loose from this ever-teeming, all-important, and inexhaustible theme! It fills with serene joy the superior region of the soul, and denies entrance to the clouds and storms of worldly perturbation and care. Such the height of its joy, that music, and wine, leave the raised hearts of our sons of delight, far, far below. And yet how is this glorious subject in most minds, by the love of the world, close compressed, and folded up, as an oak in an acorn, or a man in the womb! To develop and expand it, how great my desire! In which of its thousand shining lights shall I set it, for our final contemplation of its mighty moment to man?

Man is the most noble study of man. Let him circle the globe, let him traverse the skies; and then, for something more worthy his notice and admiration, return to himself. To himself he is a theatre immense: and was reputed such, when that theatre had much less to exhibit, than, at present, it can boast; and when it was but faintly illuminated with the glimmering beams of far more feeble lights. The so-renowned "Know thyself," was nothing but a precept enjoining a close inspection and survey of this theatre: yet that precept, as to its author, was held divine; and as to its practice, the supreme wisdom of man. That pre-

cept is now exalted into an awful command from Heaven; and that theatre is consecrated into a venerable temple, a temple of the Holy Spirit.

As in some pieces of perspective, by the pressure of the eye, so in this temple, by the pressure or perseverance of thought, the magnificent prospect is opened, and aggrandized, still more and more; and opening discovers the full dignity of man. In what does that consist? In the marvellous things the Almighty has done, and designed, for him. And if so, this survey gives at once the greatest virtue, and the greatest blessing, of life. For who can see those marvellous things without an ardent love of God, which is the supreme virtue of man? And who can reflect on such indulgence past, without an absolute trust in such a friend for the future; which of man is the supreme blessing?

But this blessing, and this virtue, this glory, and comfort of life, is lost to those to whom this temple is shut. And it is shut to the careless and ignorant; to the slothful and unawakened, in the most illustrious theory of the Christian religion. If therefore such men, in what has been advanced, shall find any thing like a key to this yet unopened temple; and shall enter its sacred and surprising recesses, and read the wonders of divine love in it; that is, in themselves, in their own condition and prospects; if they shall see, and contemplate, the three Persons of the Godhead, before creation assuming, and through time's whole length exercising, their separate parts and pro-

vinces of philanthropy; and shall behold an innumerable flight of angels for ever on the wing to receive their commands, and speed away, on various dispatches, for the temporal and eternal welfare of man —how should I rejoice! for such a key would be next in value to the key of heaven: it opens the porch, the preliminary scene to it. Therefore have I kept it on the anvil so long; and yet how unfinished at last! May some master-hand accomplish, and multitudes open the yet absolutely unknown scene of their own nature, and blessed destination, with it.

And now, my friend, tell me, how must his love of glory fail; how must his ambition creep, who, after the strong inspiration of such a view as this, miserably confines it beneath the sun? Consider this view, and see how high human nature may soar; then look down on the Centaur, and see (if thou canst bear the sight) how low the sons of Heaven may fall! Shall a being whose interests spread so wide as to take in both ends of the creation; shall a being deeply concerned in what was done in the days of Adam, and more deeply still, in what shall be done in the great day of consummation; shall such an expansive and far-interested being, with the most sordid and despicable self-denial, and the most inconceivably criminal poverty of spirit, imprison his stifled thought, and nail down his little heart to the narrow span of this present life! God forbid. If there is the least sense of dignity, or fear of shame; the least spark of man, alive; let us consider that we are not only the fa-

vourites, but the sons too, of Heaven; and obey, in this our voyage of human life, as Æneas in his from Troy, the Delian oracle,

Antiquam exquirite matrem. VIRG.

But our overwhelming shame, and almost incurable misery, is, that we are so carnalized by our lusts, that our heavenly* mother, in our esteem, has no blessing for us; that a spiritual Paradise, is no Paradise; that it is a Paradise we wish lost; one from which we desire to fall; and to wallow, *Epicuri de grege porci*, in our beloved mire. And yet what is this spot of earth which so swallows us up, and in its gulf of obscenities extinguishes our love of heaven? Its enchantment is very short. A few days, a few hours, may make us as wise as Solomon. For rest assured, earth's rankest idolater, who now, perhaps, in our flourishing school of infidelity thinks a wiser than Solomon is here, will, at the close of life, in his aching heart, ask Solomon's pardon for not believing him before.

I believe that wise and experienced prince, whose wisdom and experience was designed to spare future ages their own fatal experience in folly; and closing with his last sentiment, the sum of his divine philosophy, affirm, that many a philosopher may justly be reputed a fool; that as there is but one God, one trial, one great tribunal, one salvation; so there is but one wisdom! that all which, devoid of that, as-

* Gal. iv. 26.

sumes the name, is but folly, of different colours and degrees; gay, grave, wealthy, lettered, domestic, political, civil, military, recluse, ostentatious, humble, or triumphant; and is so called in the language of angels, in the sole-authentic and unalterable style of eternity.

That awful word inspires, and awakens ideas that slept before; it points to heaven, and shews me where I fail.—Though studious to do it justice, I have wronged my theme; and wronged it much. Somewhat more is wanting to consummate and crown the dignity of man. What have I advanced? "That "man is near to the blessed angels?" Is he not more? —Yes, most adorable Jesus! man is more; much more. O whither dost Thou call me? Whither dost Thou transport astonished human thought? I scarce dare look up to the summit of such stupendous love. Leave I not cherubim and seraphim below?- Ye first-born of light! ye thrones! dominions! principalities! and powers! what do I behold? How awed, and how raptured; with what prostration of heart, what elevation of joy, from this remote region, this lowest vale of the creation, this land of darkness and shadow of death, look I up through incumbent clouds of misery and sin, and behold—a Man in heaven! In the highest heaven! In union with the Most High! In union with your most adored and eternal King! And so throned in authority, to you so superior in power, as to make ceaseless intercession for the rest of mankind; not for those whose fall left seats empty in hea-

ven: Oh aid me with your language, with words more than human to praise Him! that Advocate unwearied for his relations, (proud language!) for his earth-born relations, and friends below.

Is not this almost too much for human modesty to mention? for human frailty to credit? for human corruption to admit?—But is it not also far too much for human gratitude to leave unproclaimed, unresounded, unadored? "I go to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God." What heart-subduing, thought-overwhelming, man-exalting, words are these? What an amazing, I had almost said levelling, condescension of the Deity! What an amazing, I had almost said what a deifying, sublimation of man!

O blessed revelation! that opens such wonders. O dreadful revelation! if it opens them in vain. And are there those with whom they go for nought? Strange men! in possession of a blessing, the bare hopes of which supported the spirits of the wise, for four thousand years, under all the calamities of life and terrors of death; and know they not that it is in their hands? Or knowing, cast it away as of no value? A blessing, the very shadow of which made the body of the Patriarchal and Jewish religion! A blessing, after which the whole earth panted, as the hart for the water-brooks! A blessing, on which the heavenly host were sent to congratulate mankind; and sing the glad tidings into their transported hearts! A blessing, which was more than an equivalent for

Paradise lost! And is this blessing declined, rejected, exploded, despised, ridiculed? O unhappy men!—The frailty of man is almost as incomprehensible as the mercies of God.

Who then can inculcate too much the dignity of man? For what equally to a due sense of it can inspire a contempt of the world, a fondness for which occasions the madness I deplore? Indeed a due sense of it, evidently, includes the whole of our duty. It inspires high veneration, and great gratitude, to God, who gave it; it inspires a reverence for ourselves, which is of utmost moment to our character and peace; and it inspires a proper regard for all mankind, as equal sharers in it; which regard would prevent infinite mischief, and banish half the miseries of life.

This, its universal use, its nature so pregnant of good effects, determined me to the choice of this too much neglected subject. And perhaps I have now set it in the strongest light. But if not, its importance is such that it should be set in all lights; and from every point that imagination can suggest, and reason authorize, strike, if possible, the degenerate, deeply-sunk, and ever-groveling, human heart. He that looks not on man in the light above, or some light similar and equivalent, knows not himself; is a perfect stranger at home; his heart wanders an exile from his destined felicity; he deprives himself of the powerful impulse which he so much wants, and which nature denies, and which revelation designed him, for his more vigorous advance in virtue here, and his

more sublime ascent in glory hereafter: which two are the whole of his happiness; all the rest is extrinsic, precarious, transient, and, inevitably, mortal.

And who will dare say, that he who declines, or falls from, the noble and elevating object of contemplation above-mentioned, and the glorious hopes it inspires, into the barren field of amusement and trifle; or into the bestial abyss of a few years' debauch, for his portion; who will dare affirm, that such a wretch differs not as much in reason and happiness, from the true Christian, as a quadruped differs in form from a man? It is not form, but manners, which make humanity. The mould in which we are cast, only says what we should be; nothing but our conduct tells us what we are. What wretches are they who contradict their figure, and accuse nature of having set a wrong stamp on their lying clay? The most despicable and deplorable being under heaven is a Pagan in a Christian land. He is like a rank growth of poison in Paradise. He confines that thought, which should set out at the creation, and travel down with wonder and adoration, at every step, through the countless mercies and miracles of God for man, into nature's final dissolution; and thence launch for a never-ending voyage in a blessed eternity,—to the nothing of threescore years; and the wretched means of annihilating that nothing, of contracting that span; lust exhausts, luxury overwhelms, and, by heaping on fuel, quite puts out the fire.

Where is that dignity which reason exacts, and

which revelation exalts, in man? In what I have said on that subject, I have, I think, done more to our purpose, than he who measures the heavens and numbers the stars. I have taken (as I conceive) the true measure of man. That extensive measure rising above the skies, which the Centaur dwarfs down to the scanty span of the brute creation, to the *bestia triumphanti;* and making (might I so speak) a dunghill of our condition, with the cock in the fable, for a grain of sensuality, spurns the jewel away; the powers angelic, the radiant beams of the Divinity, in the real man.

But while I contemplate his grandeur (so mixt our nature, so great and little is man), I feel his weakness; in mind and body, I feel his infirmities.—Pain, this instant, stops my pen—stops it short of what I had proposed to say.—It bids me take, while I may, my leave of him I love.—I take a solemn, because, perhaps, a final leave. It is, at least, possible, we may meet no more. No more in this foreign land; in this gloomy apartment of the boundless universe of God.

O Thou! the last, and strongest hold that earth has on me! my friend in Jesus Christ! my rival in immortal hope! and my companion (I trust) for eternity! come to my bosom: though so far remote, I take thee to my heart. Souls suffer no separation from obstruction of matter, or distance of place; oceans may roll between us, and climates interpose, in vain. The whole material creation is no bar to the

winged mind. Farewell—Through boundless ages, fare thou well. The Dignity of man, and blessing of Heaven, be with thee; the broad hand of the Almighty cover thee: mayst thou shine, when the sun is quenched! Mayst thou live, and triumph, when time expires!

This cordial duty done, this human debt discharged, my mind is eased, my spirits revive; my pain is less. And when this endless letter is ended, I shall drop thee for the present; and this idle pen, and an idler world (that other feather in the scale of eternity), for ever. He that drops the world, before that drops him, he only knows its real value, and the value of his own soul. And whatever the gaiety of the world pretends to, he only can have a solid, permanent, and uninterrupted joy of heart, who builds it on the rock; on hope of the divine mercy. Give a man the world, and give him no more; and his happiness is at an end: the human heart will necessarily feel a futurity, through all the superabundance earth can heap on it: nothing can possibly give it a peace independent of an hereafter; that point of view in his creation, that purchase of blood in his redemption, and yet in human conduct, that ever-neglected All of man.

Ask the last ill of mortality; ask pleasure's or ambition's triumph store triumphant, what is human life? Knowledge of the world recommends recess; knowledge of life reconciles to the grave. Few sufficiently consider how great mercy is implied in the grant of death. With a heart quite disengaged, its

cable cut, imploring a smooth passage and gentle gale, bound for that port whence none returns, I wait the mighty MASTER's call: that call irresistible, which every moment should expect; which every fool forgets; every knave dreads; every wise man welcomes; and every monarch obeys.

And yet, my friend, some of our few coævals close not altogether with this way of thinking; but rather seem to judge, that some little degree of precipitation may be laid to its charge. As the dial knows not the hour it points out; so they, by their infirmities and decays, discover their time of day to all, but themselves. Their desires grow stronger, as enjoyments grow more coy. It is somewhat to be feared, that their hearts gravitate, almost as much as their scarce-animated clay; and take but few, and feeble flights above the level of the world; though very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou welcome haven of eternal rest! thou delightful region of inextinguishable love! thou great goal of perfection! thou bright meridian of glory! thou boundless ocean of unrepenting pleasure! thou city of God!

And is man invited to this fulness of fruition? And is man importuned to partake the glories of the Almighty?—He that weighs not well this transcendent height of love divine, is far from being able to comprehend the terrible depth of human guilt. And what guilt so deep as that of a baptized infidel! A rank heathen rising out of the sacred font, is reason's greatest shock, the deepest wound of rectitude, the

blackest brand of earth, the sigh of angels, a second spear in the side of the most blessed Jesus, and the supreme triumph of the foe to God and man..

Most gracious God! in happiness and dignity, how widely distant is man from man? In both, what an immense superiority has the pious believer? Scarce seems of the same species the believing, and apostate, world. To the first, how justly may we cry out, O ye happy sons of the fallen Adam! where is the damage you received from your father's fall? Where are the once lamenting miseries of life, where are the once unsurmountable terrors of death, fled! I discern the Dignity of man, when his carcase is in the dust. I congratulate his happiness, while the worm is feasting on him. Rejoice, O ye dead! exult and sing, ye dark inhabitants of the grave! for do I not behold, even in the grave, the comfort of heaven; when, with an eye of Christian faith, in heaven I behold a Man? the Man Christ Jesus? and with transport and adoration let me resound the lofty language of the prophet,—"A man the fellow of the Almighty*."

THE CONCLUSION.

And now, my friend, let us now consider how deplorably wretched is that man amongst us, who is deaf to such a voice, and blind to such a sight! And how criminally wretched is he, if he voluntarily de-

* Zachar. c. xiii. 7.

clines them? If he voluntarily recalls the suspended curse; obstinately presents disarmed death with his mortal sting again; and pours out, in his distraction, all the phials of its original bitterness on the days, how dismal and unredeemed, of an apostate human life? What a formidable revelation does such a man bespeak in lieu of that which brought pardon and peace? What a revelation of no glad tidings awaits him, when his now-involving cloud breaks, and truth thunders on the dreadfully illumined soul, at the no-distant hour of death?

It is, indeed, in man's option, which of these revelations he will admit (one he must); but it is not in man's wisdom to make the least apology for a wrong option in so plain and important a point. A point how plain! I shall here just touch on a single proof of the truth of Christianity, which renders any further proof, among proofs innumerable, unnecessary with me, to create and support our Christian faith.

Every thing in the natural world is a proof of a God; and almost every thing in the moral world is a proof of a revelation. As, in the material universe, all exactly corresponds with the previous ideas of it in the Divine Mind; and in a substantial copy renders legible to man its invisible pattern, in the thought of the Almighty; so a complete history of mankind (if such could be had) would be little more than the same Almighty's prophetic word in Scripture, materialized into fact. The prophets are more accurate and authentic historians of the future than

the most happy genius, uninspired, can possibly be of the past. And want we miracles for our conviction? The series of Scripture prophecies accomplished, is the most striking of miracles: it is a miracle not expiring in a transient act; but of great longevity, persisting in a perpetual increasing weight and validity, through the protracted course of many thousand years. It is a living, growing, permanent, paramount, miracle, lighted up as a lamp of illumination for all ages; that all able to see, might be quite unable to disbelieve; quite unable to retain reason, and, at the same time, renounce belief. For if the Scripture prophecies are fulfilled, the Scripture is the word of God; and if the Scripture is the word of God, Christianity cannot be false. Shall we reject it as false, when, in the present fate of almost all nations, we are surrounded, and condemned, by a full ocular demonstration of its being true! Let us dispute our own existence, if we would continue of a piece with this.

Where is our natural curiosity? and that, in points which concern us most? Would we know what we are; or what we may, or must be to all eternity? Nothing but revelation can tell us either. So that if we acted on no higher motive than mere instinct, revelation would be precious in our sight. But vice extinguishes not our reason only, but our instinct too, when it would do us any good. Either the strongest instinct of curiosity is extinguished by it, or there is an astonishing and pernicious self-denial in infidels,

if their most natural curiosity is still alive. Revelation was written for our instruction; and are we too wise to be instructed by God himself? Throw we by unread, and as of no consequence, an unsealed letter sent to us from the Almighty?

In our infidels it is no less than defiance of common sense, no less than hardened impudence to the rational nature of man, to pretend, that on due enquiry, they want proof of the truth of the Gospel. Its proof is not only great, but amazing; it is not only sufficient to convince, but astonish: such its accumulated, overwhelming evidence, so truly "marvellous its light," that, if rejected, it lays us under a necessity of rejecting reason and revelation together. And is not reason obeyed, the sole dignity, glory, grandeur, of gods and men? Nothing can so much degrade, as the violation of reason; and no violation of reason is equal to a wrong option in this point supreme. Too faint is the strongest colouring of all the severe fables of antiquity, to reach an absurdity so absurd.

That of Circe's sty, and Chiron's stud, falls short of the mark. For reason, in those days, had not such powerful motives to combat, or such glaring lights to resist: and guilt blackens, in proportion to the strength of the lights resisted, and the motives overcome.

Since then (as has been proved) if reason makes a man, by ceasing to be Christians they cease to be men; by what term shall we call those whom no term can defame? Let, therefore, your offended sis-

ter pardon my parable; and let no honest man, for the future, so far offend propriety, and profane our language, as to join in one absurd word such repugnant ideas, as those of the Centaur and the man: one the idea of a being horridly rejoicing in the miserable and mistaken thought, that this short life, shortened by vice and vanity, is his all; and that, like the snuff of a candle, it shall go out for ever: rejoicing to think, that after all his bustle and ambition, he shall only, by his putrid carcase, add rankness to a clod of earth, and defile the dirt: the other idea is that of a being, big with humble but triumphant hope, of exalting with his immortal spirit, joy celestial; of adding melody to seraphic choirs, in ceaseless hallelujahs to their Eternal King. "Sing praises, sing praises "to our God; sing praises, sing praises to our King. "Praise him, all ye angels! praise him, all his host! "praise him, sun and moon! praise him, all ye stars, "and light!" For a fairer light, a nobler star, a more illustrious sun, is risen; the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings; and all the glories of unbounded creation are outshone by the smallest beam of the Gospel; by the faintest hope of wrath appeased, and eternal life.

Yet this is that light, which some, in their superior wisdom, would extinguish as superfluous to man, and set up the dim taper of their reason in its stead:

> O thou *worst* guide, philosopher, and friend!
> Say, for thou know'st, what is it to be wise?
>
> ESSAY ON MAN.

With equal wisdom, thou mightst imagine the sun superfluous, and unnecessary to the material world; and call on chaos for primæval darkness, as the great blessing of mankind. Say, for now indeed thou knowest, is not Lucifer in the list of such benefactors as these?

Though in this his lordship is quite as good a friend to mankind, as he is a philosopher in his materiality of the soul; yet I will venture advancing towards that precious doctrine, so far as to call, without scruple, such sort of imaginations the thoughts of the body; for from the body's predominance they necessarily rise; and that necessity proves the necessity of religion, which they resist: so that such men (which, perhaps, they are not aware of), while, as much as they can, they condemn religion, they commend it too; they as loudly call for it, as the disease for the cure. For religion is nothing but an expedient for supporting, against the body's assaults and encroachments, the sacred interests of the soul.

At your request, sir, in the wide-spread ruins of our faith and virtue, I have taken a slight view of a more melancholy scene than could be presented by famine, pestilence, or the sword: but by God's grace we shall repent, and not suffer our greatest glory to become our greatest dread; not suffer our prime and unspeakable blessing, immortality, to render existence the most insupportable curse. What a terrible inversion is this of the high favours of Heaven! This must be the case, when man is all

sense; for to sense nothing exists but the present. Our present is so dear, that our future is undone. Strange conduct! when our step out of life is so short, and so sure, sudden, and innumerable our accidents in it, that almost every moment assures us, that unless in time we lay hold on our invisible, and, to reason alone, existing God, we shall soon fall from all we held so dear; and that then, not only all our happiness, but all our hope, is at an end.

What is there, O my countrymen! O my friend! O my poor, endangered, immortal soul! what is there from Adam to this hour, but fully confirms what I say? The world allures us; the world condemns us: he who takes that kind advice, which through his own experience the world conveys, will despise all its charms. As ignorance teems with infidelity, so knowledge is a fast friend of faith. If we would but know, what we cannot but know; if we would but believe our senses in what passes, and our common records in what has passed; it would not only reconcile us to, but almost supply the place of, our creed: so very natural a growth is the Christian of the man.

As natural a growth of an infidel is a beast; a beast by God uncreated,—by Adam unnamed. That defect Adam's meanest son has supplied, by writing *Centaur* in the horrid gap, which the bold infidel has made, by the desperate erasure of his Christian name.

Is this thought too opprobrious, and a term of reproach?—I will make some amends by a short hint

of advice, which may save from reproach the whole length of their lives: "Let not the brute any longer "run away with the man, lest something more dread-"ful should run away with the brute."

If this advice is refused; as Alexander said of the Persian effeminate army, "There are many enemies, but few soldiers;" so say I of this Paphian isle, There are a multitude of people, but a small remnant of men! And of all brutes, the most brutal is the volunteer in brutality; the brute self-made; the brute not from the decree, but abuse, of nature; the strange brute-affrighting brute, with the stature, vesture, voice, and face of man; the brute mysterious, irrationally rational, and (with horror let me speak it) deplorably immortal.

Does the "Centaur" still sound too harsh in their ears? I will so far indulge them, as to change it for "slave;" and instead of making free with their hides, only rattle their chains; for chains they wear, galling, infamous chains! Till stubborn and wild will is broken by grace and reason, no man is free; but madly prefers the heavy burdens of his lust, and the scourges of conscience, to the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

And is it possible that pride should be the growth of slavery? They are proud of bondage, triumph in infamy, and imagine that in their high flights of folly and riot unrestrained, there is something great. No man is great, till he sees that every thing in this world is little; and of all that is little, that they are

the least. Would they know what is greatness? Great is he, and he alone, who makes the whole creation, and its amazing cause, the circumference, and his own true interest the centre, of his thoughts; who has strength and steadiness to weigh in perpetual and equal balance, right and wrong, body and soul, time and eternity, nature and God; and so weighing, to disdain any very anxious thought, for less than the greatest good his limited nature admits, and his all-powerful God has promised to bestow; that God, "whose are the pillars of the earth, and who has set "the world upon them; who in his wrath thun-"ders out of heaven, and his adversaries are broken "to pieces."

In this, sir, in giving our supreme good, our supreme effort and concern, in spite of all temptation, lies the greatness of man. Well may it lie in a prudence, such a prudence as angels cannot exceed. If this is wanting, vain are all other pretensions to greatness, whether of king, hero, or philosopher; and a Cæsar, a Marlborough, a Newton, a Bolingbroke, a fiddler, tumbler, and scaramouch, may be thrown together into one promiscuous heap of equal impotence for attaining true greatness. The performance, indeed, of each of these candidates for glory, the multitude may admire; but the performer at the same time will be condemned by the wise, as little-minded and mean; nay, as a very fool in the language of Scripture, that is, in the judgment of God.

You see, therefore, to what titles of renown our

fine men, on the strictest enquiry, may put in a just pretence! Fool! Slave! Centaur! The last is the newest, and (which would be well for them) may be the least understood; but let them choose which they please. Were it referred to me, their antichristian glory should be quite aggrandized, and shine, like His Holiness, triple-crowned with all three.

To that tremendous Power, which alone is truly great and good; in whose favour is all light, life, hope, peace, joy, and salvation; be thanks, praise, and dominion over the rebel, fool, slave, and Centaur, in our hearts. And may our hearts, thus exercised, have a lively feeling of the God invisible; and, panting for the rivers of true pleasure at his right hand, abhor the life in vogue; and in faith unshaken, and virtue unfeigned, be confirmed for evermore; nor longer (to the reproach eternal of the present age) let our sins, as well as our situation, proclaim us to be

——Toto divisos orbe Britannos. VIRG.

But to damp my rising hope, I know not if another distinction of Britons from the greatest part of mankind, may not have been the glorious, indeed, but fatal cause of this most ignominious effect. It is the great glory of God to draw good out of evil. To draw evil out of good is the great infamy of man.

I suspect, that an insolent pride in British liberty, in some measure, inspires British licence of thought, and extravagance of opinion; which as extravagant

a practice for ever follows: if so, vice and infidelity are as much our national distempers, as the scurvy, or the spleen. Though discretion much befriends happiness, happiness is no friend to discretion. Great blessings intoxicate. Liberty, fraught with blessings as it is, when unabused, has, perhaps, been abused to our destruction. And as British malt, sublimated into the most pernicious liquor (now so much in use) —so British liberty, carried into licentiousness, has poisoned and brutalised the British state. By too much exalting our spirits, it corrupts our manners; and that glory of our constitution is the disgrace of our lives. Purely to prove themselves freemen, some turn infidels: hanging themselves would be as good, and, to the public, a less pernicious proof. Such men should perform a long quarantine ere admitted to the embrace even of a brother. Heaven preserve thee, my friend, from the freedom, and wisdom, and happiness, now in vogue! He is most free, who is bound by the laws; he is most wise, who owns himself weak; he is most happy, who abridges his pleasures; and he is most magnanimous, O ye bold, intrepid, Heaven-defying Britons! who fears his God.

He, indeed, is the most magnanimous, for by that fear he is fortified against all other. And he is by far the most happy! for the divine favour, the light of God's countenance, is the sun of the human soul, whence all its vegetation of real felicity: and though the world (which from him receives all its feeble rays) may greatly shine in our eyes, yet, as wisely

may we expect vigorous and vivifying heat from the moon, as any solid satisfaction from it.

But just one word to the busy, ambitious, learned, and gay. Vice and virtue excepted, no man on earth can say what is good or ill, in as great a tumult and uproar as your passions are, O ye busy! and ambitious! about every thing else: And to love, and labour at, what God commands, and to desire and hope what he promises, is the single great lesson, O ye learned! and the single true pleasure, O ye gay! of human life.

And now, my friend, farewell. I must trust myself no longer with the pen; for while I think there is a possibility, that, touched by some happy stroke, but one fellow-mortal may be raised from a perishing man of the earth to a blessed immortal, my busy mind perpetually suggests new hints, and my heart knows not how to refrain from pursuing them. The volume grows upon my hands, till its very bulk would defeat its end. New rays of thought dart in upon me, which, like cross lights, confound and perplex each other. Something of this you may have perceived already. Even Centaurs have been human; and I feel the strong tie of humanity, when going to bid them a last, an everlasting farewell. Like one about to leave unhappy friends in the midst of a destruction, which yet, by timely care, they might escape; still, at the moment of departure, some new caution occurs to me, some new exhortation, something unsaid, or not so well said as it might have

been. But now, the adieu must be final: with only this additional, and still more urgent, and to them surprising, motive for reformation, (viz.) my assuring them, that what I have hitherto, through tenderness, allowed to pass for fable, is actual fact: that the Centaur is indeed not fabulous: that a man without religion is really a beast; and such is he pronounced in Scripture*, where it is said that "He "also is flesh:" that is, a brute! And (what should strike them not a little) this is assigned as the reason for sweeping away our degenerate race by the flood. A brute, in truth, he is; with this only difference, that his superior understanding gives him more venom than the most envenomed of serpents; and enables him to do more fatal mischief to himself and others, than without the curse of reason, of abused reason, could possibly be done. So far, therefore, is it from satire, that kind admonition is all which the word Centaur implies. And as in some words there was once imagined to reside a magic power over dæmons themselves, that opinion might still prevail, if the design of these letters, to the wish of all honest men, could succeed, and the foul nature of the Centaur be cast out by the name. If this should be the fortunate event, these pages would live in the lives of those they shall reclaim. And if so, O Bolingbroke! and you, his applauding idolizers! what to this is that vain immortality which the meanest writers wish, and which the noblest can

* Gen. vi.

scarce attain? Praise is an error, where pardon is indulgence; and pardon is indulgence to the brightest parts misapplied. They rather provoke, than please, the worthy mind, by laying it under the disagreeable necessity, and clashing dispositions, of admiring the writer, and disapproving the man. Which, in some sort, is like admiring Nero for his fiddle, when, through his own phrensy, his glorious capital was in flames.

I am, my dear friend,

Nov. 29, 1754. Truly yours.

POSTSCRIPT.

I RECEIVED your objections, and thank you for them. I believe every judicious reader will make the same. All I can say, for mitigation of their censure, is, that they who take on them to read lectures in this laughing age, if they wish an audience but moderately large, must have weight enough to make impression on the serious; and levity enough to catch those wanton ears, which, unless tickled by that feather, would continue shut as close as their silly hearts are to virtue, though an angel should take the chair.

I know you are so kindly concerned for your friend's reputation, that the mixture of levity with solemnity, in these letters, makes you apprehensive of its exposing the writer to censure or ridicule. Yet, how is it possible to write on so dreadfully mixed a subject, as the ways of men, without being agitated by the most contradictory emotions? his follies so fantastically wrong, so ludicrously absurd; his capacities for virtue and happiness so noble; his vices so shocking; their consequence so deplorable!—So earnestly desirous I am of waking him from that dream, in which he nods upon the brink of eternal ruin, that if nothing can do it but my own disgrace, my own buffoonery (as perhaps he will think it), I

rejoice to fall so low. If he will but laugh with me, at himself, he is freely welcome to laugh at me, as much as he sees cause. It is not his applause, but his welfare, that is sought. Amendment is the point in view. That point unproposed, (and could the Viscount* propose it?) all censure is mere malice, and mere impertinence is all harangue; and entitles a Tully, a Bolingbroke, and a parrot, to just the same portion of our esteem and applause. Would you, my friend, judge aright of men? Ask not what they have done, but why; or their characters will be still in the dark.—But I fear I am setting your judgment of men too right for my own interest; I must leave it under the power of some partiality, for the sake of your humble servant.

Pardon one word more. †Centaur is of Greek extraction, and signifies *stimulation.* May it here prove (as intended) a spur to virtue; and, most, in myself. Standing in awe of my own pen, may I take the counsel I give! Thus only can I be sure of doing any good; thus only can I boldly say, without the reader's leave, that I have not written in vain. Is not this a new expedient for writing to some little purpose; and an expedient of no small service to the public, if all our writers would use the same? Their numbers, then, would be less a nuisance; and half the nation (blessed change!) would aim at virtue, as well as fame. This, too, might be some sort of apology for those heroes of the pen, who, dauntless at their own

* Lord Bolingbroke. † From *κεντεῖν, stimulare.*

danger, with the spirit of a Curtius, for the sake of their dear country, leap headlong into the press, (too hasty patriots!) and perish there.

Vincit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido. VIRG.

THE END.

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